

THE BRAILLE MONITOR

INKPRINT EDITION

VOICE OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND



The National Federation of the Blind is not an organization
speaking for the blind--it is the blind speaking for themselves

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THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

NEW AFFILIATE—DELAWARE	508
by Kenneth Jernigan	
NFB EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETS	509
by Perry Sundquist	
BOOK SELECTION	511
by Florence Grannis	
CIVIL WAR: NO CURRENT ISSUE	520
by Kenneth Jernigan	
UNFAIR	525
NOTHING UNUSUAL ABOUT TEACHER THIS YEAR	528
by Frances Craig	
MERGING OF GEM STATE WELFARE AGENCIES	532
by John Corlett	
UNIT AIDING BLIND IS CALLED BIASED	533
MEET OUR STATE PRESIDENT—NATALIE MATTHEWS;	535
AND OUR STATE AFFILIATE—MAINE	
STUDENT AND PROFESSIONAL DIVISION—WEST VIRGINIA	537
FEDERATION OF THE BLIND	
by Jean Ann Chambers	
NO “LAUGH-IN” MATTER	538
ARIZONA CONVENTION	539
by James R. Carlock	
STAR SPANGLED BANNER SPANGED	541
GOLDEN CANE AWARDED	542
by Don Lund	
BRAILLE UNDER FIRE	543
by Harry Booth	
THE RIGHT TO EQUAL TREATMENT	546
TROUBLED TEACHER IN ALASKA	550

NEVADA CONVENTION	553
by Walda Kerner	
THE CATES CASE	555
AN SOS FOR MORE GLASSES	557
by Isabelle L. D. Grant	
BLAZING NEW OCCUPATIONAL PATHS	557
CALIFORNIA CONVENTION	558
TIME FOR PRIZES	560
MONITOR MINIATURES	560

NEW AFFILIATE-DELAWARE

by
Kenneth Jernigan

Well, the Federation scores again! We have another new affiliate, this time, Delaware.

On Thursday, December 12, I represented the Federation at a meeting in Washington, D. C., to discuss vending stand problems and legislation. Representatives of the American Foundation for the Blind, the Blinded Veterans of American, Federal Rehab, and others were present. We were attempting to see if we could agree on a united front for vending stand legislation in the coming Congress. It would appear that we have made real progress, but more about this later.

On the afternoon of December 12, John and Virginia Nagle, Florence Grannis and I caught a train and headed for Wilmington, Delaware. Except for the fact that John kept talking about the rough ride and demanded a seat belt, the trip was without incident. It takes about an hour and a half from Washington to Wilmington, and we just had time for a leisurely dinner enroute.

When we got to Wilmington, we went to the Dupont Hotel and met with Ned and Helen Graham, and John and Joanna Spence. Ever since Ned's election to the Federation Board last summer, he has been working away with redoubled effort. He and Helen had come up from Maryland on December 10 and had been making contacts and doing organizing work with great energy and enthusiasm.

Joe Spence and his wife Joanna, live in Claymont, Delaware and are people that Federationists will be hearing much about in the coming months. Joe operates a vending stand and is one of the finest people in our movement. He and I had been corresponding for several weeks, and he did much of the groundwork for the organization of our affiliate. I talked with the Grahams and the Spences and we laid plans for the next day-Friday, the 13th, a day of great good luck. Early in the morning I went to call on Don Smith, a blind man who owns and operates his own insurance agency. I found him to be a man of intelligence and perception. It was clear that he would be one of the leaders of our organizational establishment.

The Nagles and the Grahams spent the morning rounding up people to come to the meeting that night. In the afternoon the Nagles, Mrs. Grannis, and I visited the Delaware Commission for the Blind. The building is taken up with a sheltered shop and administrative offices. Mr. Jones, director of the commission, told us that some twenty to forty-five people work in the shop at various times during the year and that the total payroll last year was slightly over \$50,000. The shop has special exemption so that it may pay less than the minimum wage. Mr. Jones explained that the vending stand operators are considered state employees and that they receive a "salary", which is connected with the amount of earnings from the stand. All receipts from stands go to the State Treasury. Unprofitable stands are subsidized. If funds from the earnings of the stands are sufficient at the end of the year, a "Christmas bonus" is given, the amount each operator receives to be determined by the agency in accordance with a number of factors.

We met at the YMCA at 7:30 in the evening to hold the organizational meeting. In view of the fact that Delaware has approximately 400,000 population, the turnout of 45 was more than gratifying. Mae Davidow came down from Pennsylvania and Roger and Nancy Petersen came up from Maryland to help get things started. We talked about the objectives of the organization, adopted a constitution and elected officers.

As in Illinois and Kansas, the officers and board members of our Delaware affiliate are people of capability and energy. They indicate the caliber of our affiliate and true promise for the future. The president is Joe Spence, 501 Aldon Road, Claymont, Delaware, 1903. The first vice president is Ed Stokes, who is an assemblyman for General Motors. The second vice president is Ray Munis, a retired call dispatcher for Dupont. The secretary is Ann Robinson, a regular first grade teacher in a public school. The treasurer is Donald McDonnell, a retail clerk. For two year terms on the board, Marie Munis and Otis Herring were elected. Marie is a housewife, and Otis is an ordained minister and a graduate student at the University of Delaware. For one year board terms, Joanna Spence and Don Smith were elected. Joanna is a medical secretary, and Don (as already mentioned) operates his own insurance agency.

Friday, December 13, was a great day for the blind of Delaware and for the National Federation of the Blind. Again let it be said: The Federation is on the march! The Delaware Federation of the Blind has joined our ranks. Hail to this new affiliate and to the others soon to come.

Cordially yours,

Kenneth Jernigan
President

* * * * *

NFB EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETS


by
Perry Sundquist

A meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Federation of the Blind was held in Des Moines, Iowa, on November 30 and December 1, 1968. However, for those members arriving early, the meeting took on a festive note. Kenneth and Anna Katherine Jernigan had as their guests at an old-fashioned Thanksgiving dinner the following: Franklin and Gertrude VanVliet, Harold Reagan, Russell Kletzing, and your editor. Also present were staff members of the Iowa Commission for the Blind, Florence Grannis, James Valliant, and Manuel Urena (and Manuel's delightful wife, Patricia). The main course at the feast was a 22½ pound fresh turkey and a 15 pound country ham from Missouri, together with all of the fixings—including possum grape jelly, rose petal preserves, crisply fried crab cakes, hot mince pies, and too much else to mention.

Following the dinner the members of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance



Franklin VanVliet Presents Flags to NFB
at Executive Committee Meeting
Des Moines, Iowa
November, 1968



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repaired to the recreation room and hammered out a detailed proposed budget for the calendar year 1969, in front of a roaring fire.

The Executive Committee meeting opened bright and early on Saturday morning and continued throughout the day with all members present. This was one of the most fruitful and productive meetings we have ever had. It was characterized by a thoroughgoing review of Federation activities, comprehensive planning for the year to come, and the vibrant enthusiasm and sense of accomplishment now so strongly apparent throughout our movement.

The Committee voted formal acceptance of two new NFB affiliates-- the Illinois Congress of the Blind and the Sunflower Federation of the Blind. The President said that it was hoped the blind of Delaware could be organized on December 13 and that plans are actively going forward for new affiliates in every other state. It was voted that the Federation participate in the newly organized Conference of Non-Profit Organizations-- C.O.N.O. This is an alliance of various non-profit organizations to exchange information and assistance in fundraising and related problems and in establishment of a code of ethics for fundraising. It was voted to participate for one year and that the President is to make a report and recommendations concerning future participation to the Executive Committee and the membership at the convention next summer in Columbia.

President Jernigan gave a comprehensive report concerning the present operations of the Federation: the Federation is expanding beyond the present confines of its Berkeley office and will occupy some of the space in the tenBroek residence. Because of the tremendous growth of the Monitor mailing list and Federation activities in general, we are installing IBM automated equipment in the Berkeley office. This will enable us to get out much more work in less time. In fact, in Monitor production alone we will cut our man hours in half.

As one measure of Federation progress, the growth of the Monitor during the past few months is significant. The talking book issue, which was only started in September, already goes to approximately 2,000 readers. If present trends continue this should more than double during the next six months. We now run more than 2,500 copies of the print edition and approximately 2,000 copies of the Braille edition.

The President continued his report by announcing the establishment of a Federation office in the Brown Hotel building in Des Moines. This office should be in full operation soon. However, the President's mailing address will continue to be 524 Fourth Street, Des Moines, Iowa, 50309.

At the conclusion of the President's report, Franklin VanVliet presented to the NFB as a gift from Gertrude and himself an NFB flag and matching American flag. The NFB flag uses the emblem of the organization with the words "Security, Equality, Opportunity" and, in larger letters, the words "National Federation of the Blind", all applied in bright blue on a gold background. The size of each flag is 3 feet by 5 feet. The material is nylon and the work was done by hand by a friend of Franklin's. Both the NFB and American flags are suitably mounted on stands to make a balanced platform scene. The market cost of a similar set of flags to any affiliate would be \$238.00. It was voted that the Executive Committee

accept the NFB flag as the official flag of the National Federation of the Blind, subject to the ratification of this action by the delegates to the next national convention.

In the afternoon session the budget for 1969 was adopted, and a discussion was held concerning various cases of discrimination against individual blind persons throughout the country. In some of these cases the Federation may initiate or assist in legal action.

The Sunday morning session was taken up almost entirely with discussion of legislative matters. Besides the members of the Committee, Eulasee Hardenbergh (President of our Alabama affiliate) was present. Incidentally, Eulasee reports that the Alabama Association is making real progress.

Our principal effort in the coming Congress will be to secure enactment of the Disability Insurance Bill. This may well be the most important single piece of legislation affecting the blind ever presented to Congress. It certainly ranks high on any list. Of course, we will also be dealing with all of the other legislative matters involved in the resolutions adopted at the Des Moines convention and embodied in long-standing Federation policy.

This is a brief synopsis and summary of the formal proceedings of the meeting of the Executive Committee, but it fails to capture the spirit of unity and hope which pervaded the meeting. There was a general conviction and determination that every state in the nation will soon be organized and that present affiliates will be strengthened and invigorated. Your editor can only repeat that it was a meeting of tremendous verve and enthusiasm. Everyone came away with the feeling that the Federation is stronger and better organized than it has ever been and that great accomplishments lie immediately ahead of us. It was a stimulating and enjoyable occasion.

BOOK SELECTION

by

Florence Grannis

[Editor's Note: This is an address delivered at a federal conference of regional libraries for the blind, Washington, D. C., December 2, 1968. Mrs. Grannis is the Assistant Director in charge of library and Social Services at the Iowa Commission for the Blind, Des Moines, Iowa. It will be remembered that her article, "Philosophical Implications of Book Selection for the Blind", was published in the September 1968 issue of The Braille Monitor.]

Part I Philosophy

Library service is not only the provision of books; it is the bringing of the right book to the right reader. Without a reader a book is in suspended animation; without users a library is dead. People and books are the positive and negative poles that keep alive the current of library service.

Any kind of library service that is designated to bring together people and books, . . .

must be based on intelligent book selection. Librarians must know how to choose wisely books that are the expression of human life and thought, that offer the materials of knowledge, that satisfy or stimulate individual development, that enlarge and clarify mass intelligence.¹

Book selection for the blind has been and should be based on two principles:

That blind readers are [identical] in needs and tastes to sighted readers; and that they wish to have access to the same books that are available to their sighted friends. Blindness is a physical and not a mental handicap and the selection of books for the blind should be. . . the same as the selection of books for sighted readers.²

No regional library for the blind is truly a library if it does nothing but send to borrowers, whether by their request or by some more or less haphazard method, the books supplied to it by the Library of Congress. Besides giving reference service, reader's advisory service, and all the other library services of a good public library, each library for the blind must build its own book collection.

Citizens should find a collection carefully chosen for its intrinsic worth, its timeliness, and its potential usefulness in the community. The effectiveness of the public library depends as much on the wisdom of the choice of materials, as on any other factor. Two major responsibilities of a librarian are to build up an excellent collection of materials, and to see that the inflow of new books is prompt and continuous.³

To put it another way,

When all is said and done, the major task of any library is to supply books to people—to supply those books which the individual user will find valuable and useful. The amount of satisfaction a reader finds in a library depends directly upon the kinds of books the librarian has available for his use. If the librarian manages consistently to choose books of no interest or use to his readers, he cannot expect them to be satisfied with his library.⁴

1 Helen E. Haines, Living with Books (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1950), p. 16.

2 Francis R. St. John, Survey of Library Service for the Blind 1956 (New York: American Foundation for the Blind, 1957), p.71.

3 Joseph L. Wheeler and Herbert Goldhor, Practical Administration of Public Libraries (New York and Evanston: Harper & Row, 1962), p. 460.

4 Mary Duncan Carter and Wallace John Bonk, Building Library Collections (New York and London: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1964), pp. 12-13.

As I have said, one of the traditional principles of book selection is:

Select the Right Books for the Library's Readers. The first question is, who are the library's patrons? Is the library to serve only those who actually come to it today? Or should the librarian attempt to provide books for all those who may come some day? Should the librarian, to put it another way, select for present clientele only, or also for some potential clientele (however that potential group may be defined)?

One of the underlying principles of the free public library is that it is open to all. This statement implies that the librarian has the responsibility for selecting for all the members of the community—even though they may not come to the library at the moment—since they are all welcome to come. [This librarian believes] that this ideal is a central tenet to be observed in determining the library's book selection policies. . . . [I feel that the first principle—the right books for the library's readers—] imposes on the librarian the responsibility for reflecting in the library collection all the manifold interests of [the] potential . . . clientele.

. . . [There are two approaches to carrying out this view.] One is the passive approach: Let those who come, come; the library will have a good collection to serve them so that any future reader will find the material he wants. The other is the active approach: buy through the whole range of subjects, but proselytize to increase the use of the library by those not now using it. . .

Another traditional statement of principle which reflects this conviction that the library should serve the whole community—and not merely the group of present readers—runs as follows:

See to it that No Race, Nationality, Profession, Trade, Religion, School of Thought, or Local Custom is Overlooked. Again, if one accepts this principle, it is argued that one buys in these areas even though members of these particular groups may not be active present users of the library. They are all potential users, and their possible future interests should be anticipated.

One can move from this broadening of the selector's range—which is based upon the make-up of the community—to an even wider principle:

Every Library Collection Should be Built up According to a Definite Plan on a Broad General Foundation. The librarians who advocate this approach have advanced the view that the library collection has its own needs, apart from the needs of the community which it serves. These librarians feel that the selector has a responsibility to the collection itself and should attempt to round it out. Such a collection would have material on all subjects, whether or not there were any groups in the community interested in the various subjects, either as active or potential users.⁵

5 Ibid., p. 15-16.

Materials Acquired Should Meet High Standards of Quality in Content, Expression, and Format. Librarians committed to this view would emphasize authoritativeness, factual accuracy, effective expression, significance of subject, sincerity of the author's purpose, and responsibility of the author's opinions. They would resist buying a book which failed to meet these standards, even if the book were in heavy demand.⁶

The Collection is Inclusive and Contains Whatever Materials Contribute to the Purposes of the Library. . . . it is important to remember, if one is trying to select the best books, that there are as many kinds of best as there are kinds of readers. They might ask, . . . 'Best in what? in style? in interest? in instructiveness? in suggestiveness? in power? Best for whom? for the ignorant? for people in general? for college graduates? for the retired scholar?' Since these librarians attempt to serve all those various categories of readers, they would be willing to accept a variety of materials, whose standards of quality might vary as the titles are seen to be useful for one group or another.

Such librarians will look carefully at each title in the process of selecting, decide for which type of reader it was intended, and then apply the appropriate standards of quality. A library built on this principle might indeed include the classics of fiction, but it might also include popular materials.⁷

Here we have the philosophy of book selection--bring the right books to the right reader; develop a collection of books which the present borrowers and the potential borrowers will find excellent--interesting, enjoyable, and useful.

Though this philosophy of book selection has been developed for public libraries with sighted readers it need not be changed one iota for libraries for the blind. The regional libraries are public libraries. Our community is our state or area. Our potential borrowers are legion--the blind and physically handicapped we are not now reaching. How much of these do not now use our services because we do not have the books that interest them?

Building the Collection

I wonder how many of you are saying to yourselves, "That is all very well, we do not have enough staff to send out the books sent to us by LC, let alone try to get staff and money to build our own collection." There is not time, nor is it appropriate to now discuss the methods for acquiring these resources, but it can be done! As you see the gratification of your borrowers when they read your local history collection or when you have taken pains to acquire books on their hobbies, you will feel your efforts have been very much worthwhile. Competent as the Division is, it cannot and should not fill our roles for us--the roles of the local libraries for the blind.

When considering the development of a book collection it is convenient to make some

6 Ibid., p. 17-18.

7 Ibid., p. 19-20.

division of it: children's books, young adult books, student collection, adult books, harvest years, local material.

In selecting books for children, the Library's objective is to make available a collection that satisfies the informational, recreational, and cultural reading needs and potentials of children from preschool age to age fourteen. Books are included which meet the general demands of the majority of children, along with books whose special qualities make them valuable to children with special needs, talents, problems, or interests.⁸

We are fortunate indeed in the wealth of truly beautiful and appealing books being published for children. There is no lack of creative vigor in the writing of fiction, biography, and history. (Our discouragement is in plowing our way to it.) We have splendid access to new poetry and old, and to folklore in fresh collections. . . , and newly translated editions. The United States is envied abroad for . . . our wide range of informational books, so well produced and on so many levels of interest and reading skill.⁹

Naturally, we must always keep in mind that the children's books in libraries for the blind must be meaningful without illustrations. Those of us not in large library settings perhaps have even greater problems because of our lack of access to new children's books in print than we do to adult books.

Small libraries, without approval copies at hand, must usually rely on printed reviews and approved lists and on visits to bookstores and exhibits. The need for a variety of reviews with their different emphases and coverage is greater for the small library than it is for the larger one. . . . There is special help in the "For the Small Library" recommendation in Booklist; in the unfavorable as well as favorable verdicts expressed in both SCHOOL LIBRARY JOURNAL and the Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books, with a helpful key also in the latter to "marginal" and "special" values; . . . and [the] reviews in Horn Book.

For the small library, even more important guidance than that of current reviews. . . is that offered later in selective lists and in catalogs with annual supplements, in which entries are starred and double-starred. ALA's annual "Notable Children's Books" appears each spring; the Horn Book "Fanfare" summary is printed in its August issue; during Book Week and before Christmas many lists of the year's outstanding books are printed by large libraries and newspapers. No single summary or review medium is sufficient, but a number of them together become a substitute for reading and examination of the books themselves.¹⁰

8 Enoch Pratt Free Library, Selection Policies for Children's Books, Appendix A, Revised, to Book Selection Policies and Procedures (Baltimore: Office of Work with Children, Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1963), p. 1.

9 Virginia Haviland, "Search for the Real Thing," School Library Journal, in Library Journal (New York: R. R. Bowker, Dec. 15, 1961), p. 8.

10 Ibid., p. 10.

What should be our criteria for juvenile book selection? I like a statement of the Des Moines public library.

The Library's objective in providing reading material for children is to guide the child toward the enjoyment and appreciation of good books. This in turn may help him to a better understanding of himself as an individual, as a member of society, and to establish in him patterns of public library use that will carry over into adulthood. In selecting books for children, the Library tries to anticipate and to meet the diverse skills and interests of readers at all ages from the beginner to the child ready for adult books and to supply critical and appreciative discussions of children's literature for adults aware of the possibilities of guiding a child toward the enjoyment of reading.

In the initial selection of juvenile titles it is the Library's policy to acquire the most outstanding children's books published each year and then to expend funds in heavy duplication.

. . . Duplication of desirable titles is then emphasized rather than the addition of mediocre titles.

Textbooks are occasionally purchased for their informational content when needed. Books in foreign languages are seldom purchased. Books in long series, e.g., Tom Swift, Nancy Drew, and others below the standard of average good taste and literary merit, are not included.¹¹

I find we have a woeful lack of children's books. True there are some problems in augmenting the collection sent to us by the Library of Congress—relatively few children have tape recorders. We can stimulate their acquisition. When we have purchased all the good juvenile large type titles we can have volunteers type more. The possibility for hand Brailled juvenile books is limitless.

Books for Young Adults

The very nature of adolescence itself—its wide spread of interests, volatile emotions, sharp individual differences, its craving for action and excitement, its many divergent and pressing needs, its spread of maturity and reading abilities—makes it imperative that young people have a large, diversified collection of books from which to choose. Continuing advancement toward reading maturity is dependent upon the availability of such a collection of books.¹²

What are the things to remember about. . . young people when it comes to selecting books? . . . there will be representatives of all reading levels, the slow, the normal (if

11 The Public Library of Des Moines, Policies for the Selection of Books and Related Library Materials (Des Moines: The Public Library of Des Moines, 1968), p. 9-10.

12 Geneva R. Hanna and Mariana K. McAllister, Books, Young People, and Reading Guidance, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1960), p. 103.

there are any such), and the advanced; and of all interests, the prosaic and the poetic, the fanciful and the practical. There will be those concerned with school work and those concerned with making a living. There will be some who will quickly outstrip you in the breadth and the technicality of their reading, and others who will require time and patience before they even begin to experience pleasure and satisfaction from [books]. For all of these there must be something, . . . [so] in your whole collection, try to have: scope, coverage, variety, readability. . . .¹³

The young adult books surely merge with the student collection. However I have more in mind the college young people when I say "student." The students want the "racy" books, the daring books, the "mod" and hippy books. They want to be "in" and read the "in" books. They have Tom Wolfe's The Kandy-kolored tangerine-flake, streamline baby. Will they also get The pump house gang? They also want to be literate and to have read the classics. Many of them are serious, and Orwell and Aldous Huxley are for them. They are a part of the social movement and they want to know what the Baldwin's have to say.

Perhaps we must exercise greater care in book selection for adults than for any other segment of the public. We so often have proved to us that the sweet, wholesome books are wanted: the westerns, the mysteries, the light romances, the historical novels--and we should have these books--for they satisfy one segment of our libraries' public. But we should not have these only. If we need A. lantern in her hand, we also need Light in August and The electric Kool-aid acid test; if we need Candy, we also need Candide.

Since a high proportion of our library patrons are beyond the age of 60, we must all be aware of book selection for those in the "harvest years." There seem to be few studies of what books older people wish to read. But observation from those of us in this field shows us a few things. These senior citizens often have an emphasis on nostalgia, on the shorter book rather than the longer book, on morality rather than experimentalism. But one should never make the mistake of feeling all 60-plus citizens want to read the same thing. A grizzled exterior may hide a desire to read Heidi, Lady Chatterley, or the Victorian era Pearl!

Part II

The Right Not to Read

One of the officials of the Division said to me once, "Look, there are 6,000 blind people in Iowa--how come you are serving only 3,700 of them?" Well, I believe I should build a book collection for the people who are not reading as well as for those who are. If blind Johnny Jones of Grundy Center should suddenly decide he wants a book, I believe I should have one he would like. But I believe even more that Johnny Jones and Sally Smith should have the right to reject books, too. If they have never read a book in their lives and have no interest in them, why should they suddenly, now they have become blind, become readers? It is the epitome of "too handiness" for the talking book service to be thrust on a person simply because he cannot see. True kindness consists in helping him learn techniques

¹³ Amelia H. Munson, An Ample Field (Chicago: American Library Association, 1950), p. 81.

so that he can happily and successfully do the things he did before blindness, whether these things be tipping in taverns or coffee klatsch chatter.

Selecting the Books to be Sent to the Borrowers

Many of the libraries for the blind have attempted to keep track of all the books each borrower has ever read. This is because members of the library staff select books for the borrowers (not each and every one of them, perhaps, but very many of them). What a monumental task this is—especially with borrowers that have been heavy readers since the beginning of the “books for the blind” program! (If you consider that a borrower may have been 18 years of age when he began receiving the service in 1935 and may live until 1977 or longer, and may have averaged two books per week, by 1977 he will have read 4,368 books. Many borrowers read more books than this per week but, of course, most borrowers did not begin service in 1935.) Let us be conservative—say that the library has 3,500 borrowers (if it has 3,500 at any one time, it will obviously have had many more than 3,500 borrowers in a 10-year period), say that each borrower has read 1,000 books during his lifetime of borrowing—that is 3,500,000 books to keep track of! Now let us consider another aspect of this—who is doing the selecting for the borrowers? The librarian? Most of us have only one professional staff member (if that many). If he or she does all the selecting, how can he do anything else? How can he even do this adequately? Does he really know enough about each book and each borrower to get them together wisely? If clerks do the task, won’t the matching of books and borrower be even more difficult? (Would every clerk know that Faulkner’s Go Down, Moses is perhaps not the ideal book for the sweet little old lady?)

All right, what is the alternative to all this? Stated simply it is, help each borrower choose for himself. (I have not here explored the attitudes which cause the librarian to presuppose the blind borrower is unable to do this. We might question whether we are not being presumptuous and condescending in feeling that we are better able to choose books for James Jensen and Ruby Rhodes than they are themselves and are not they able themselves to keep track of which books they have read?)

We all know many borrowers can read the Braille Book Review for themselves or have someone who can read the Talking Book Topics to them, or they can listen to the handy little disc that has recently been supplied with Talking Book Topics and can then type or write out a list of requests. But there are borrowers who cannot do this. What to do? Rather than choose books for them (and many, of course, ask us to do this very thing), why not send someone to their homes to help them write down their choices. Who? Telephone Pioneers, Red Cross ladies, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Campfire Girls, “Out Reach” Workers, church workers—volunteers of this sort are legion. In many cases the county welfare worker or the visiting nurse can assist. Mobilize your community to your service! (You will find out many other interesting bits of information and be able to settle problems and grievances with their help.) In conjunction with these volunteers a WOTs line (if you have or can get it) is a great asset. The time spent in phoning the borrower and consulting with him concerning his choice of reading is prime service time!

To sum up—by building a comprehensive collection of books, by recruiting the citizens of your community to be your library extension service, you can bring the right book to the right reader, you can help implement the saying of Aldous Huxley:

Every man who knows how to read has it in his power to magnify himself, to multiply the ways in which he exists, to make his life full, significant and interesting.¹⁴

¹⁴ Haines, op cit., p. 15.

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CIVIL WAR: NO CURRENT ISSUE

by

Kenneth Jernigan

As Federationists know, we have consistently refrained from spending any time in the pages of the Monitor attacking the American Council of the Blind or looking back to the days of the civil war in our movement. The issue is long since behind us, and it is as fruitless and irrelevant to rehash the Boston and Santa Fe Conventions as to refight the Battle of Gettysburg--although some people still do both. Our concern is with the problems and accomplishments of today and the future.

This has been the policy of the Federation, and that policy will continue. However, I thought you might like to see an exchange of letters which I recently had with Jack Reed, the current president of our former Illinois affiliate. Regardless of what reply (if any) I receive from Mr. Reed or what may be said in other publications, it is not planned to make further comments on this matter in the pages of the Monitor. The civil war in the organized blind movement is a dead issue and has only historical interest. It is not relevant to the present situation or future plans of the Federation.

November 25, 1968

Mr. Kenneth Jernigan, President
National Federation of the Blind
Iowa Commission for the Blind
Fourth and Keosauqua
Des Moines, Iowa 50309

Dear Mr. Jernigan:

Enclosed is a copy of a Resolution adopted by the Illinois Federation of the Blind at its annual convention October 19, 1968.

The convention directed me to forward this Resolution to you and to the Editor of your publication. Also, I was instructed to arrange for you or your representative to appear before the Board of Directors of the Illinois Federation of the Blind to discuss the content of the Resolution and its purpose. I will appreciate receiving your reaction to such a meeting and a suggestion as to a possible time when a representative of the National Federation of the Blind might be available to meet with us.

May I assure you that the IFB has only one intention: to promote complete cooperation in order to achieve benefits to the blind people of this nation. I think you know most of us well enough to be assured that there is no animosity toward any organization or individuals within any organization. We sincerely hope that you agree with the intention of this Resolution and can find it possible to have a representative engage in conversation with us.

Very truly yours,

Jack Reed
President

**RESOLUTION TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF A MERGER OF THE
AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND AND THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND**

WHEREAS, the Illinois Federation of the Blind was one of the seven- member state organizations which chartered and helped to organize the National Federation of the Blind in 1940; and

WHEREAS, the Illinois Federation of the Blind was also instrumental in the organization of the American Council of the Blind in 1961 and 1962; and

WHEREAS, because of this experience, the IFB recognizes the importance of a united front on the local, state, and national levels regarding problems of the blind and their solution; and

WHEREAS, it is our opinion that there is very little difference philosophically between the aims and goals of the ACB and the NFB; and

WHEREAS, it would appear that the welfare of the blind could be better served by a single national organization,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Illinois Federation of the Blind in convention assembled this 19th day of October, 1968, go on record as instructing the Board of Directors of the IFB to request a meeting between the presidents of the ACB and the NFB, for the express purpose of exploring the possibility of merging the ACB and the NFB into one national organization for the blind. Said meeting should be held prior to the 1969 convention of the ACB and the NFB.

SIGNED: Board of Directors

December 4, 1968

Mr. Jack Reed, President
Illinois Federation of the Blind, Inc.,
108 Alby
Alton, Illinois

Dear Mr. Reed:

I have your letter of November 25 and must confess that I find parts of it very nearly astonishing. I refer to that part which suggests that the American Council President or his representative, and the NFB President or his representative, appear before your State Board to discuss your resolution. However, let me put this matter to one side and proceed to the substance of your proposal.

In a recent publication of one of the state affiliates of the National Federation of the Blind the following item appeared:

"Recent announcements that the National Federation of the Blind has just recently organized a new organization in Illinois, and another by the American Council that they had added four new affiliates, points up the wasteful dual effort that is being exerted by these two national organizations of the blind. Both of these organizations have many able, dedicated people who could be working together for the benefit of all blind people. Instead, they are spending time and money, and expending talent and energy fighting each other. Who suffers in this fight? All blind people, that's who.

"The proof of this is that not one real significant piece of legislation has been passed in Washington for the benefit of all blind people, in the last few years. Why? Because neither of the national organizations has good strong affiliates in enough states. Both the national groups now have capable, hard working legislative representatives in Washington, but without the unified support of blind people throughout the nation, their efforts are fruitless. Senators and Congressmen must hear from their people, from their own states, before they move on any legislation.

"It's about time some steps are taken to get the leaders of the two organizations to at least try to resolve their differences and reunite. If enough voices are raised, they will be heard. Every blind person who is a member of either of the national organizations should let their leaders know that they want some action in this direction. We are tired of being pawns in this strife. The theme of this year's State Convention is, 'Unite for Progress-Onward and Upward.' Let this be the start of our effort for unity in our nation's organized blind."

I wrote to the President of that state affiliate in part as follows:

"Several things about this item require comment. In the first place, and most important, it does not create unity. Instead, it tends to sow dissension and weaken the bonds which bind us together as a movement. In the next place, it speaks of both the Federation and the American Council as 'they', implying that the other states make up the Federation and that your state is not really part of the movement but a neutral force

standing between the Federation and the American Council. If the United States and Britain should have problems, your state (or any other state) cannot impartially refer to both parties as 'they'. Even if your state disagrees with a given act of national policy, it is still 'we'.

"This sort of attitude on the part of some states and some state leaders is, in my opinion, the very thing that brought on the original civil war in the organized blind movement, and it is certainly the largest factor in the continuation of any remaining strife. As any realistic observer knows, there is not the slightest chance that the American Council and the Federation will reunite into a single organization at this time. No amount of disruption or name calling will change this situation. There is, however, a real chance for the beginning of peaceful coexistence and joint action and discussion in a few limited areas--that is, if discordant elements do not wreck the possibility by stridently insisting that the world be as they want it instead of as it is.

"Finally, I would say that the item in your publication makes several statements and assumptions in direct contradicition of the facts. To say that 'not one real significant piece of legislation has been passed in Washington for the benefit of all blind people in the last few years' is simply, in my opinion, to say what is not the truth. To say or imply that the organization of new affiliates of the Federation is simply a tactic in an over-all struggle with the American Council is again, in my opinion, totally false.

"In other words, what I am saying is this. The days of the civil war are behind us. We ought to look forward, not backward. Most of the affiliates are doing this, with only a few isolated pockets of bickering left.

"The American Council and the National Federation are both facts of life. We should go on from that foundation to try to build coexistence and ultimate cooperation. There are still those who talk of turning back the clock in Russia and putting the Czar on the throne again but such talk is really not helpful in solving the problems of today's world.

"I believe the National Federation of the Blind is stronger today than ever before in its history and that we are on the threshold of our most fruitful period of accomplishment. Everywhere we are on the move. The civil war and the strife are far behind us, and the overwhelming majority of the membership intend to keep it that way."

Mr. Reed, I have quoted these items to you to set the stage for the remainder of what I have to say. In the 1950's the organized blind movement in this nation had achieved tremendous momentum and was on the verge of realizing most of its goals. Then it was beset by civil war. In my opinion, the ruin which almost occurred was caused not so much by the open dissenters as by a self-styled neutralist group which refused to see facts as they were and take a firm stand. Indeed, some of the so-called "neutralists" were like some of the "neutral nations" in the world today. They saw the struggle as a golden opportunity to achieve the prominence which their lack of accomplishment would otherwise have made impossible. They worked both sides for all they were worth and very nearly wrecked the movement. Some, of course, were simply naive.

In 1961 the minority left the Federation and formed the American Council of the

Blind. This was the beginning of constructive rebuilding. Today the National Federation of the Blind is stronger, better financed, bigger, more enthusiastic, and more united than it has ever been. We are systematically organizing in states where we do not have affiliates and are strengthening the affiliates we already have. We are going to organize every state in this country, and do it without delay.

As to the American Council of the Blind, we hold no rancor toward that organization and wish it well. Although many times smaller and less active than the Federation, it has capable leaders and is a going concern. If we wished to disrupt or destroy the Council or to bring it back into the Federation (none of which is the case) we do not have the power or means of doing so. On the other hand, if the Council wished (and I do not for one moment imply that such is the case) to disrupt our movement, come back into it, or in any way interfere with our activities, they could not do so. The day may come when the National Federation of the Blind and the American Council of the Blind will merge (although I am by no means certain that such is the case), but it certainly cannot and will not come in this generation and for the foreseeable future. Furthermore, even if it could be accomplished, such a step would not be constructive but would only lead to dissension and harm to the cause of the blind. Most of the people who took part in the original conflict are still alive and still have influence. They still believe that their views were and are correct.

Beyond all of this there are now at least some policy differences between the Council and the Federation. The Council, for instance, supports the "two for one" airfare. The Federation opposes this measure. The Council favors COMSTAC and its successor agency, and the Federation believes that the whole idea of accreditation as it is now being tried in our field is wrong and extremely detrimental to the interests of the blind (see Braille Monitors for 1965 and 1966). From an article which appeared in the recent Braille Forum, I assume that at least a substantial body of Council opinion holds that our Model White Cane Law is not advantageous or constructive. The Federation, on the other hand, believes that this law is a virtual Bill of Rights for the blind, that its provisions guaranteeing equal opportunity in employment and forbidding discrimination on public transportation and in public accommodations are vitally important. As you may know, at least twelve states have now adopted the Model White Cane Law. It is not necessary to go into the merits of these or other issues to make the point, which is that there are policy differences which now exist. It seems to us in the Federation that the best policy consists in seeing matters as they are and not looking back ten years to try to insist that they are what we would like them to be. We have refrained from making any attacks on the Council in our publications or otherwise. We plan to continue this policy. Despite some of the articles in recent issues of the official publication of the Council, we hope that they will treat us in the same manner.

Surely an essential first step toward peaceful coexistence and ultimate unity and harmony is courteous and civilized treatment of one's neighbors. As this step is accomplished, it would be hoped that cooperative action could be taken in areas of common agreement-legislative and otherwise.

In the meantime people who insist on talking in terms of the past and pretending that progress is not being made or that a civil war still exists are not behaving constructively and are not likely to be given very serious attention by the overwhelming majority of the members of the Federation. We are positive and optimistic in our outlook and are not

interested in looking back to the "might have beens" of yesterday. We have a job to do and are joyously going forth to do it. Those who wish to work with us in the cause are welcome to join us. These are the views of the Federation and this is the last statement which I contemplate making on this matter since it is largely a dead issue.

Very truly yours,

Kenneth Jernigan, President
National Federation of the Blind

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UNFAIR

[The following article appeared in the Long Island Press on Sunday, November 10, 1968. The discussion which follows the article will sufficiently familiarize Monitor readers with the background facts and circumstances so that the potential impact of the case discussed in the article upon blind persons throughout the country will be readily apparent.]

"The Long Island Region of the National Labor Relations Board in investigating a charge that Abilities, Inc., Albertson, discharged an employee because he was active in organizing employees on behalf of Local 56, International Brotherhood of Firemen and Oilers.

"The Unfair Labor Practice Charge was filed with Regional Director Samuel M. Kaynard, by George P. Filbert of Hauppauge, line foreman in the Abilities' packaging department in Syosset.

"Filbert charged he was fired October 24 after 13 years of service with Abilities--and just five months after he received a \$10- a-week raise--on the grounds that he "lacked potential". The real reason, Filbert said in his complaint to the National Labor Relations Board, was that he was conducting organizing meetings "on my lunch hour in the parking lot."

"The National Labor Relations Board must first determine whether it has jurisdiction--a weighty question that often leads to strange answers. Recently, for instance, NLRB Region 2 held that Columbia University was involved in interstate commerce (and thus came within the National Labor Relations Board's jurisdiction) because its Defense Department contracts involved shipments over state lines."

Abilities, Inc. is a sheltered workshop which provides employment to approximately 450 persons possessing a wide range of disabilities, including blindness. George P. Filbert is a polio victim who has been confined to a wheelchair for a number of years.

The National Labor Relations Board is a Federal Agency established in the public

interest to protect the rights of employees to form or join labor organizations or, in the absence of actual union organizational activity, simply to join together with fellow employees in an effort to improve wages, hours or working conditions.

Employees have the Federal statutory right to be free from any coercion or intimidation in these union activities and, directing our attention to the specific statutory section here involved, it is illegal for an employer to discharge an employee because of such activity. If the National Labor Relations Board determines that a particular employee's discharge has been motivated by his union activity, it will order the employer to offer reinstatement to the discharged employee and to make up for any financial loss he has suffered as a result of the unlawful discharge.

However, before the NLRB can legally determine whether or not an unlawful act has been committed, it must first determine that it has "jurisdiction" over the particular employer involved.

The NLRB derives its authority from the Commerce Clause of the United States Constitution. Accordingly, an employer who does no business in interstate commerce (either directly or indirectly across state lines) does not fall within the jurisdiction of the agency and, therefore, the NLRB has no authority to act to remedy conduct, no matter how outrageous that conduct might be.

Further, when Congress enacted the National Labor Relations Act it expressly exempted certain classes of employers from the coverage of the Act. Accordingly, these employers are not "employers within the meaning of the Act". That is, although they may actually be engaged in interstate commerce, public policy requires that they be exempt from the coverage of the Act. These expressed exemptions include all governmental entities and, the one with which we are here concerned, non-profit hospitals.

From the exemption granted to these non-profit hospitals has evolved a long line of NLRB case law which, in broad terms, holds that non-profit "charitable organizations" fall outside the purview of NLRB authority. Therefore, in the NLRB's view, charitable organizations are not "employers" and their employees are not "employees" within the meaning of the Act. As a result, these "employees" have no Federal protection if they attempt to improve their wages, hours or working conditions through union activity.

This Board-made law struck home so far as blind persons are concerned in 1960 when, in the case of Sheltered Workshops of San Diego, (126 NLRB 961). [See tenBroek, "Rehabilitation vs. Employment: An Important NLRB Decision", Braille Monitor, April 1960, p. 25.] The NLRB, in a 3 to 2 split decision, refused to assert jurisdiction. The Board majority found it unnecessary to reach the question as to whether the sheltered workshop in question was an "employer" and, accordingly, whether its employees were "employees within the meaning of the Act." The Board majority found that the workshop "is a non-profit California Corporation which is engaged in providing work experience under controlled conditions for persons unemployable elsewhere because of their physical, mental, emotional, or social disabilities." The majority goes on to conclude that, "Since, as we find, the workshop's purposes are directed entirely toward the rehabilitation of unemployable persons, its commercial activities should be viewed only as a means to that end. Based upon

these considerations, as well as the limited effect on commerce of labor disputes involving such rehabilitation centers, and the workshop's close affiliation with state agencies and philanthropic organizations, we believe that it would not effectuate the policies of the Act to assert jurisdiction here."

Accordingly, the employees of sheltered workshops across the country currently enjoy no Federal protection if they engage in an effort to improve their wages, hours or working conditions through self-organizational activities.

Two members of the Board wrote a vigorous dissent in the San Diego case. They considered it to be vital to determine whether or not the workshop was in fact an "employer" engaged in interstate commerce and they had no difficulty in reaching such a conclusion. They pointed out that, in the five years preceding the filing of the Petition in the case, the workshop had derived revenues in excess of one-half million dollars from private commercial ventures and that, during that same period, it had received approximately \$30,000 through charitable contributions. The minority also had no difficulty in concluding that the workshop's "trainees" were in fact "employees."

The dissenting members suggest that perhaps the majority took the wrong approach in reaching its decision. They point out that the majority apparently balanced the interests of the workshop's commercial activities against its efforts aimed at rehabilitation and that it concluded that the rehabilitation service was more important than its commercial activities. On the other hand, the minority would balance the combined activities of commercial venture and efforts aimed at rehabilitation against the Federal right of employees to engage in union activity "and we would find that the latter is equally important." The minority states, "The workshop's rehabilitation work benefits the entire community. We do not, of course, deny that this is so, but we reject the implicit corollary that a non-profit organization engaging in socially beneficial activities, therefore owes its employees less than other employers do."

Federationists will recall that in the last session of the Congress, the National Federation of the Blind had a bill introduced which would amend the National Labor Relations Act so that the employees of sheltered workshops would expressly come within the protection of the NLRB. However, this probably will be extremely difficult to accomplish. On the other hand, as noted above, the case law which now stands as a barrier to the protection for employees of sheltered workshops if they endeavor to improve their working conditions through union activity is not statutory but is Board-made. Therefore, the Board has the power to change it. It is conceivable that the case of George P. Filbert might present the Board with the ideal opportunity.

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NOTHING UNUSUAL ABOUT TEACHER THIS YEAR

by
Frances Craig

[Editor's Note: The following article is reprinted from the Des Moines (Iowa) Register. It not only tells the story of a remarkable young woman (who happens to be blind) successfully beginning her teaching career, but it also embodies the philosophy of the National Federation of the Blind with respect to blind persons and their chosen ways of earning a living.]

Pretty brunet Judy Young is on her first teaching assignment: She handles all the academic subjects of fourth-graders in a self-contained room at Olmsted School in the Des Moines suburb of Urbandale.

This 23-year-old from Dunkerton, a 1968 graduate of the University of Iowa, might be a typical beginning teacher except for one quality:

She is totally blind and has been since the age of 7, following surgery for a brain tumor.

Miss Young is one of Iowa's first sightless teachers in public schools but surely not the last.

Another is William Fuller, guidance counselor and teacher since last year at Milton High School in southeast Iowa.

And perhaps a dozen would-be teachers are in training at the University of Iowa in Iowa City, Iowa State University in Ames, and the University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls—probably more than in any state, says Kenneth Jernigan, director of the Iowa Commission for the Blind.

Recently, the Iowa State Education Association passed a resolution encouraging “qualified blind persons” to prepare for teaching and urging schools to hire them. A further boost is the federal civil rights law, enacted in 1967. A part of this law protects against discrimination in employment and is applicable to “equally qualified” blind who apply for jobs.

But it takes some “selling” to convince the public—and even the blind themselves—that a blind teacher belongs in the classroom.

Miss Young is one who is convinced. She says:

“My blindness isn't a handicap; it's just a characteristic.”

Her students seem to accept the view and parents are coming around to it.

Mothers and fathers of these Olmsted fourth-graders admit to misgivings when they learned Miss Young had been hired by Urbandale's school superintendent.

Says one mother, "I was distressed because this situation didn't seem to accept reality. I want to give the handicapped every opportunity, but how could she possibly handle discipline problems?"

A father was indignant: "Schooling is too important to our kids today to take chances on their losing out because of a blind teacher."

Both these doubters now pronounce themselves "impressed" with how things are going at Olmsted. The mother relates, "The children really seem to be learning, and from what I can tell, things aren't too different from any classroom." After initial curiosity, her son appeared to forget the teacher's blindness, "accepting it in the same way he accepted the fact she has brown hair."

There seem to be no discipline problems; another mother thinks it's because "the children respect Miss Young and want to please her." Also "she has a good sense of humor and really knows her materials."

The once-skeptical father is convinced "this may turn out to be a really great year." He says, "I underestimated this particular girl—but I don't think all blind people are teacher material."

Jernigan, himself blind, couldn't agree more. Says he: "Some blind are cut out to be teachers; some aren't—like the rest of the public."

He is probably most responsible for the blind getting their teaching chance, not only in Iowa but also in California where he was a psychologist and counselor at a center for the blind and an active worker for education and employment opportunities.

In the 10 years he has been Iowa's Blind Commission director, he has nagged at Iowa's deans of education colleges, insisting: "Let the regular procedures apply. Judge the blind teacher by the same standards as the others."

"If she can't do the work or pass the tests, flunk her. But don't place an added obstruction in her path. Don't arbitrarily classify her as unable to teach without giving her the opportunity try."

Jernigan propounds a theory sometimes startling to the public, and even some professionals working with the blind: "Blindness is at the level of a physical nuisance. The average blind person can do the average job in the average business or profession as well as the sighted person." It's just a matter of attitude and proper training, he thinks.

It was Jernigan who convinced Judy Young that blindness is just a "characteristic." In a year she spent at the Iowa Blind Commission training center, between high school and college, she became convinced "I can do anything I make up my mind to do."

She concedes blindness is a "limitation"—but so are some other characteristics: "My weight is a characteristic. Weighing 110 pounds, I can't lift some very heavy objects, so I have to figure out other ways of moving them."



JUDY YOUNG-----BLIND TEACHER

This leads to what she calls “alternative techniques”—almost a password phrase among the determined blind at the Commission center. Her “alternative techniques” in teaching are many, and some vary from one day to the next:

As an alternative to regular textbooks, she uses Braille textbooks and teaching guides, obtained, along with many reference books, through the Iowa Blind Commission.

Her classroom materials are translated by the Tifereth Israel Sisterhood of Des Moines, described by the teacher as “that wonderful group making all things possible for us.”

At the summer’s beginning, soon after she was hired at Urbandale, Miss Young gave the Sisterhood her list: The whole bookcase full—all the books any teacher of fourth-graders uses—were ready by September. While a visitor was in her classroom, a student delivered a Braille volume and the teacher explained, “I called the Commission just yesterday and asked ‘What do you have on rocks and minerals?’ ”

She traced the title with her fingers: “This is ‘All About Rocks’—sounds fine.”

Homework papers pose no particular problem: An assistant, paid by Miss Young, reads children’s work aloud and makes corrections directed by the teacher.

“Alternative techniques” naturally call on senses of hearing and touch. Parents and children were impressed when the teacher associated each child’s name and voice within the first few days of school.

From a youngster’s viewpoint, this hearing acuity can have drawbacks, though: One stocky 9-year-old boy protests, “She can hear your little bittiest whisper and recognize your voice.”

If Miss Young exemplifies that traditional teacher with eyes in the back of her head, her sensitivity extends in another direction: “Very perceptive toward children and aware of individual interests” is how one mother put it.

Clutching a bird’s nest, Norma says it this way: “I just love school this year.”

Jernigan doesn’t think blind people must have superior intelligence to succeed, “but they definitely must develop more initiative.”

Some of Miss Young’s initiative seems to rub off on her fourth- graders who happily take on all kinds of responsibility.

A visitor found students Mona and Norma busy pushing desks around the room. The girls were a room arrangement committee; they’d observed study habits and made a floor plan. The arrangement really is an improvement, their teacher said.

“Of course, I could have rearranged the desks myself but I think this independence is important,” says Miss Young.

Children's curiosity is exciting to Miss Young—even when it applies to herself.

Girls seemed a bit more curious than boys, she relates, asking such questions as "How do you know what color you're wearing?" (No two dresses are the same color and she differentiates by fabric feel.)

She guesses that the first few days "I must have written a hundred names in Braille for my students and others." A few children took a turn around the room with her white cane which usually is tucked under her arm.

Miss Young's matter-of-fact approach is shared by William Fuller of Milton who also credits Jernigan and training at the Commission's center for self-confidence--the kind enabling him to start his public school career last year at the age of 38.

Blind from birth, he says he always has been interested in schoolwork but spent a lot of his life "knocking around from here to there," doing construction work and finally graduating from Iowa Wesleyan College at Mount Pleasant in 1959. After a seven-year interval (when he worked in a lumber yard), he had training at the center and then went back to school for his Master's degree at Missouri State Teacher's College, Kirksville.

Last year, he taught 30 Milton High School students social studies, and also was guidance counselor.

This year, his guidance duties are extended beyond the high school's 112 students to include 46 in junior high and 150 elementary school students ("quite a batch of records to keep") and he has only one little class with three students.

He supervises all testing, keeping some records in Braille and utilizing "volunteer trainees" or high school helpers (available to teachers in most Iowa schools) for some written work.

Fuller thinks his teaching was successful: "I had a couple of parents who told me their kids didn't learn anything last year and a couple who said theirs learned more than any previous year. I gather from other teachers that's about par."

His school success gave him confidence enough to marry last year, Fuller says. He indicates the turning point in his life came when he decided to determine for himself what he could do--"rather than accepting society's notion of the blind man."

Jernigan describes Judy Young, Bill Fuller and others pioneering in fields once considered impossible for the blind as "prime examples of a new generation of the blind." This new generation is mobile, self-responsible, self-confident and optimistic.

Jernigan's injunction to the public is, "Give them their chance. Let them be!"

* * * * *

MERGING OF GEM STATE WELFARE AGENCIES

by
John Corlett

[Editor's Note: The following article was published in The Idaho Statesman, Boise, and was written by a Statesman Staff Writer.]

The Fiscal and Budget Committee recommended to its parent Legislative Council of the 40th Legislature be asked to merge four welfare agencies and place them under a seven-member board of social and rehabilitative services.

The committee gave assent to a bill drafted by its staff to provide for the merger, with the understanding that it be subject to change by the Legislative Council.

The committee, which also suggested changes in the bill draft, met to review the changed legislation to be prepared by its staff.

Included in one department under the proposed board would be the Department of Public Assistance, the Youth Rehabilitation Division of the State Board of Health, and the Vocational Rehabilitation Bureau and Youth Training Center at St. Anthony, administered by the State Board of Education.

The committee agreed to a suggestion of its co-chairman, Rep. Jenkin Palmer, R-Malad, that the Commission for the Blind, created in the 1967 Legislature, continue for another biennium "and if the need arises it can be incorporated by the 41st Legislature in the new department."

Rep. Marion Davidson, D-Bonnors Ferry, voted against the merger recommendation on grounds that sufficient study had not been done. He said the data obtained by the committee in its study of the Department of Public Assistance the past months should be presented to the council "without recommendation."

The committee arrived at its recommendation following a three-hour discussion.

Palmer, a leading mover of the proposed new legislation, said he favored the creation of an expanded board of social and rehabilitative services, but "if that is too much we should settle for a board of public assistance."

Bill Child, Commissioner of public assistance, told the committee he thought inclusion of the public assistance department and the rehabilitative agencies under one single agency should not be done in one step.

The motion to merge the four agencies was made by Sen. Richard S. High, R-Twin Falls, who said federal Health, Education and Welfare officials "gave us assurance we were not going off half-cocked and that this plan works in other states."

The first special session of the 1967 Legislature instructed the committee to a thorough study and analysis of the Department of Public Assistance.

Palmer said that the committee did make such study and determined that related rehabilitation agencies in the welfare field should be merged with the department.

The department handles all children welfare services. Youth rehabilitation is administered by the State Board of Health, and the Youth Training Center to which juvenile delinquents are committed, is administered by the State Board of Education.

Under the draft bill, the seven members of the board would be appointed by the governor with confirmation by the Senate required.

Ordered removed was a phrase requiring the governor to file charges with the State Personnel Commission should he seek to remove one of the board members. Board members could not be removed except for cause.

* * * * *

UNIT AIDING BLIND IS CALLED BIASED

[Editor's Note: The following story was copyrighted 1968 by The New York Times Company and is reprinted by permission.]

A rehabilitation counselor in the Commission for the Blind is charging that the State agency, devoted to opening opportunities for the blind, discriminated against him because of his own blindness.

William Pickman is suing the State because he contends he was arbitrarily passed over for promotion to a higher position for which he qualified in a Civil Service test.

The complaint, filed recently in State Supreme Court, charges Oscar Freidensohn, the director of the commission, with appointing another man to the post of Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, but it makes no specific allegation of reasons for the action.

However, Mr. Pickman said in an interview that he believes he was bypassed because he is blind and because he has been especially vocal in demanding that employers consider blind people for responsible jobs.

The commission, he said, had been getting "negative feedback" from companies that found unacceptable his system of asking that a trial period be given to the blind person seeking a job before any employment decision was made.

However, Mr. Pickman and his lawyer both admit that there is no hope for proving in court that the reason for his failure to be promoted was his blindness.

William Goffen, the lawyer, said he would try to prove that the commission broke the State Civil Service Law in not making the promotion. He said the "extreme maneuvers" by the commission to avoid appointing Mr. Pickman would "suggest" discrimination because of blindness.

"You can't prove discrimination against blindness," Mr. Pickman said, "just as you can't prove that somebody is anti-Negro."

Mr. Freidensohn stated last summer at Civil Service Department hearings on the complaint that Mr. Pickman was not promoted because of "his abusiveness, hostility, his aggression, sarcasm, inability to relate to people."

In a statement at the hearing five of Mr. Pickman's co-workers maintained that he was "resourceful, aware and far ahead of us who are sighted."

They said there was no reason to classify him as a "marginal" employee "unless we would so demean our concept of our work that we would consider being blind as marginality in working." The appeals board, however, upheld the director's decision.

Mr. Pickman, who is 41 years old, has been totally blind since he was 18. Before 1961 he was a client in the commission's rehabilitation program that he later joined as a counselor. He is writing a dissertation for his doctorate in psychology.

"So few blind people are employed in responsible positions," he said, "that the people of this state have no idea of what a blind person can do." Mr. Pickman said he is the only blind rehabilitation counselor in the State's Civil Service system.

"The number of blind people working to help other blind people," he asserted, "is so disproportionate that it screams more loudly than anything the commission says. Working here is like being the only Negro in the Office of Economic Opportunity."

The system of caring for the blind, Mr. Pickman argued, teaches them to act in the manner expected by the society. "If blind people don't beg," he said, "the agencies beg for them."

Mr. Freidensohn contended in an interview that Mr. Pickman's charges "could not be further from the truth." He said the commission devotes much of its effort to finding jobs for the blind as teachers, rehabilitation counselors and social workers.

The commission, he said, spends \$3-million to \$4-million a year for the services of rehabilitation agencies to aid 4,000 blind persons. "Our basic philosophy," he said, "is to get the blind into the mainstream of community life."

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MEET OUR STATE PRESIDENT--NATALIE MATTHEWS,
AND OUR STATE AFFILIATE--MAINE



[Editor's Note: This is the third in the series in which the Monitor proudly presents the State Presidents and the state affiliates of the National Federation of the Blind.]

I am Mrs. Thomas Matthews of 13 Hancock Street, Augusta, Maine, and President of the Maine Council of the Blind. Many of you know me as Natalie. My husband Tom and I have five adult children, three of whom are married. We have seven grandchildren.

I was born in Newport, Maine on January 18, 1920 and lived there most of my life. On November 11, 1967, I came to Augusta our State Capital, to manage the State House vending stand, assisted by my mother.

Our Vending Stand Program is sponsored by the Division of Eye Care and Special Services.

The blind people of Maine are fortunate in that the Division of Eye Care and Special Services, whose fine Director is Mr. C. Owen Pollard, works with us to promote better programs for the blind. Mr. Paul Rourke, Director of Vocational Rehabilitation of the Blind, is always eager to assist in training blind persons for gainful employment. Our Vending Stand Program is good and our Stand Supervisor, Mr. Maurice Strand, works with us and for us. I believe that all of our stand operators are happy and successful in their jobs.

The Purpose clause of the Constitution of the Maine Council of the Blind, adopted

March 11, 1959 reads as follows: "The purpose of his organization shall be to promote activities related to the General Welfare, Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind of Maine, and of the Nation and to Co-operate with the National Federation of the Blind, in its varied Activities. . ." I believe that it was with this purpose in mind, that on February 9, 1959, an organization meeting was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Frank C. Baker in Augusta. It was on this date that Mr. Baker, assisted by Franklin VanVliet, then the President of the New Hampshire Federation of the Blind, and representing the National Federation of the Blind, and Mr. Edward Vachon, of Manchester, New Hampshire, acting as Secretary Pro tem, founded the Maine Council of the Blind. At a special meeting held on March 11, 1959, the Maine Council of the Blind adopted its Constitution and was accepted as an Affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind by our beloved National President, the late Dr. Jacobus tenBroek.

On November 14, 1965, a charter was granted to the Seabasticook Valley Chapter of Active Blind of Newport, Maine, the first chapter of the Maine Council of the Blind. I was elected its President, but resigned in December of 1967, since my work compelled me to move to Augusta. Mr. George Call of Troy, Maine is its current president.

In May of 1966, a White Cane mail campaign was conducted for the first time. It was conducted by the 11 blind and sighted members of the Seabasticook Chapter.

On September 11, 1966 a new slate of officers was nominated for the Maine Council of the Blind. Under the leadership of these new officers, the Maine Council of the Blind in a sense under-went a re-organization.

On Saturday, October 22, 1966, the first annual convention of the Maine Council of the Blind, was held since its re-organization. The place was the Twin City Motel, in Brewer, Maine. The following officers were elected: Mrs. Natalie Matthews, President; Mr. George Call, of Troy, Vice President; Mrs. Jane Hutchinson, of Augusta, Secretary; and Mr. John Barney, of Clinton, Treasurer. Mrs. Barbara Folsom, of Brewer, Mrs. Ruth Gray, of Bangor, and Mr. Erwin Coy, of Lewiston, were elected to the Board of Directors to represent their respective areas.

On September 25, 1966, a charter was granted to the Androscoggin Valley Chapter of the Blind which is located in Lewiston. Mr. Erwin Coy of Lewiston is its current president.

In January, 1967 a charter was granted to our third chapter, the Penobscot Valley Chapter of the Blind of the Bangor area. Mr. Walter McMullin of Hampden Highlands was elected president.

In September, 1967 a fourth chapter received its charter. This was the Kennebec Valley Chapter of the Blind of Waterville. Adelbert Carter was elected its president. Joseph (Rusty) Bourgoine, a student at Tufts University and Waterville is its new president.

The Maine Council of the Blind conducts the White Cane mail campaign annually. In the fall we issue MCB pens to each chapter president who in turn distributes them to its members to sell. The profit from this sale pays for all banquet tickets for MCB members and helps defray convention expenses.

The chapters have various means of fundraising but candy sales lead.

The future plans of the Maine Council of the Blind include assisting the chapters in increasing their membership, and organizing more chapters, thus strengthening our State Council. Working together we can promote better programs for the blind of Maine.

We will also stress the importance of the Braille Monitor and the fact that we are a part of it, and the National Federation of the Blind, by being a state affiliate, or local chapter.

We are looking forward to meeting other state presidents and their state affiliates through the Monitor, meanwhile may we take this opportunity to wish all of you a very happy and successful New Year in 1969.

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STUDENT AND PROFESSIONAL DIVISION-
WEST VIRGINIA FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

by
Jean Ann Chambers

Students from throughout the state of West Virginia met in Parkersburg on December 7-8, 1968, for the purpose of organizing a chapter of the National Student Division of the NFB.

Under the initiation and direction of Robert L. Hunt, President of the West Virginia Federation of the Blind, a list of eligible students was compiled. These students were then contacted by mail, informing them of the purposes of the organization and asking them to join in the formation of the West Virginia chapter. The majority of students replying to the first letter chose the weekend of December 7th as the preferable date for the proposed meeting. Plans were made and details conveyed to the students in a second letter which urged their attendance. Upon request for financial assistance, the NFB immediately complied by sending the funds required to cover the expense of the meeting.

The students arrived on Saturday afternoon at the Blennerhassett Hotel, Parkersburg, W. Va. and were welcomed by President Robert L. Hunt and officers of the West Virginia Federation. Saturday evening the first meeting was held in the main dining room of the hotel. During this session a Constitution was adopted and the name, Student and Professional Division-West Virginia Federation of the Blind, was chosen for the organization. A discussion followed concerning the problems of students in our state, and a general exchange of information was initiated.

The business session was held Sunday morning preceded by the election of officers, who then assumed their respective offices for the duration of the meeting. By-laws were adopted and future plans for the organization were discussed. John Billey, doctorate student at West Virginia University, was given consent to organize volunteer reading services throughout the state.

The second meeting of the Student and Professional Division is planned for June,

during the weekend of the Alumnae reunion of the West Virginia School for the Blind, Romney, West Virginia. The organization will also meet annually in August as part of the West Virginia Federation state convention. This coming year's convention site will be Morgantown, West Virginia.

Present officers of the Student and Professional Division--West Virginia Federation of the Blind are: President, Jean Chambers, Wheeling; Vice-president, Marla Jean Ripley, senior student at the West Virginia School for the Blind, Romney; Secretary, Edgar McDonald, Bethany; and Treasurer, Jim Kutsch, Wheeling. Larry Railey of Morgantown was elected to serve as the Student and Professional Division's representative on the Executive Board of the West Virginia Federation of the Blind, Inc.

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NO "LAUGH-IN" MATTER

[Editor's Note: The following exchange of correspondence between Tony Mannino, President of the California Council of the Blind, and the Producer of a TV show tells its own story.]

November 7, 1968

Mr. George Schlatter, Executive Producer
Rowan and Martin "Laugh-In" Show
4426 Lakeside Drive
Burbank, California 91505

Dear Mr. Schlatter:

It has been brought to my attention that a scene in a future "Laugh-In" television production consists of Mr. Henry Gibson portraying a blind man struggling out of a pool at the Burbank Mall. The object of this portrayal, I am sure, is to evoke laughter from the viewers and thus presumably bring pleasure to those who might be watching it.

Let me say that we who are blind certainly appreciate the motive of trying to bring enjoyment to people by way of television. However, we also are convinced that it is in exceedingly bad taste and inconsiderate to use a supposed plight of a blind man through which to create this laughter and pleasure. We especially condemn this type of entertainment because we are, and have been for many years, completely dedicated to the task of presenting the abilities of handicapped persons so that they may be recognized as useful citizens in our society. We have been very successful in this effort through our various programs for blind persons in education, rehabilitation, job training and employment. We now have 70 blind teachers in our California school system. We have hundreds of blind attorneys, scientists, businessmen and professional workers in various vocations. None of these appreciates the depiction of a blind person accidentally walking into a pool. It is a degrading presentation to the same public whom we are trying to convince that this is not the image of the blind person. I am sure you would concur with this attitude especially if you were a blind person yourself.

In the name of our state-wide organization, consisting of 50 chapters and 2500 blind members, I am now asking you to delete from the TV presentation the entire scene which contains the blind man with the tin cup and his supposed plight in the pool. I am making the request in a spirit of cooperation and brotherhood for the good of those whom we are striving to restore to the mainstream of society.

I sincerely hope that you will grant this request and help us achieve the high goals for which we are working in behalf of all blind persons.

I would appreciate a reply to this letter as to your decision before the program is broadcast. It would be most advantageous to all of us if we know beforehand what disposition is going to be made of this problem which threatens to jeopardize the dignity and social stature of our blind people.

Cordially yours,

Anthony G. Mannino
President

November 14, 1968

Mr. Anthony G. Mannino
California Council of the Blind, Inc.
205 South Western Avenue
Los Angeles, California 90004

Dear Mr. Mannino:

In regard to your letter of November 7th, the piece of film you mentioned has been removed from that show.

Thank you for bringing it to our attention.

Sincerely,

George Schlatter

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ARIZONA CONVENTION
by
James R. Carlock

The twenty-second annual convention of the Arizona Federation of the Blind was held November 23rd-24th at the Sands Motel in Phoenix, Arizona.

The convention unofficially began with a meeting of the Executive Board on Friday evening. The agenda was read and discussed as were possible important resolutions. Mr. Manuel Urena, NFB representative, attended this meeting.

The business of the convention began with the chairmen reports.

The Honorable Mayor of Phoenix, Mr. Milton Graham, welcomed the convention. The Honorable Frank Kelley, a member of the Arizona House of Representatives and Chairman of the Health and Welfare Committee, was the next speaker. Mr. Kelley presented a reorganization structure plan sponsored by the Health Facilities Planning Council. This plan would have reorganized all Health and Rehabilitation Services under one super agency. It may yet if it passes the Arizona Legislature: That is, with the exception of the Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired and the Arizona Industries for the Blind. After a lively discussion, the convention voted to request that services to the blind and visually impaired and the workshop for the blind be removed from the plan and that efforts be made to bring about an Arizona Commission for the Blind. We thank Rep. Frank Kelley for his interest in knowing our feelings and ideas.

The afternoon session had panel discussions on the 1968 V.R. Amendments and on current and future employment prospects for the blind in Arizona. Mr. George Mayo spoke about the creation of the Arizona affiliate of the American Association of Workers for the Blind. He completed the talk with an invitation for the Arizona Federation to apply for membership in the organization. The NFB film "leading the Blind" was shown and was interesting to all in attendance. The election was a memorable one to say the least. All five executive offices were held by their past chairmen. The office of 2nd Vice-president was tied up with Lee Roy Kerr and Bill Clark. The President had to break the tie and thus placed Lee Roy Kerr in that office for a second one year term. The elected officers are as follows: President, James R. Carlock; 1st Vice-president, Joseph Hurley; 2nd Vice-president, Lee Roy Kerr; Treasurer, Ray Miranda; and Secretary, Katherine Hurley.

The banquet had three highlights--the banquet address by Manuel Urena; our own presentation of Awards, The Henry Rush Scholarship Award of \$100 was received by Daniel Duffy, a legally blind junior at Arizona State University; and the Nicholas J. Zieser Service Award presented to Mrs. George "Fern" Hasler of Phoenix, who has done much work with and for the blind of Phoenix during the last 8 years. William Clark, Senior President of the Phoenix Center for the Blind, Board of Directors, installed our re-elected officers.

The Sunday morning session completed the convention. Items of interest were: Miss Peggy Smith gave a progress report on the plans to bring into being an Arizona Regional Library for the Blind and the Physically Disabled; Mr. Richard Bleecker told of a variety of topics which can change the prospects for the blind client for the better; Resolutions, 1968 convention city, and the designation of the 1969 delegate to the National Federation Convention were taken in turn before adjournment.

Resolutions which were adopted are: (1) to bring into being an Arizona Commission for the Blind; (2) take necessary steps to bring about an increase in the Aid to the Blind, and (3) to bring into the Arizona Statutes the Model White Cane Law. President James Carlock is the delegate to the Convention at Columbia with 1st Vice-president Joseph Hurley as alternate.

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STAR SPANGLED BANNER SPANGLED

[Editor's Note: Jose Feliciano, the famous blind singer, sang the National Anthem at a World Series baseball game in a very different way. The Associated Press carried the following story.]

Jose Feliciano says he has had no adverse reaction to the way he sang the Star Spangled Banner at the World Series and that he "sang it that way to express my love for my country."

There were many boos from the more than 53,000 at the Detroit Tigers - St. Louis Cardinals game in Detroit and critical comment afterward. Sample adverse comments: "It was nonpatriotic" and "It was a disgrace and an insult."

Feliciano, a 23-year-old blind folk guitarist, left the game during the fifth inning to return for his nightclub show.

After his first show, he told a newsman that "everyone on the plane from Detroit was extremely nice" and that since people stood and applauded at his show when he mentioned his World Series appearance, "everything seems all right."

"I love America," said Feliciano, a Puerto Rican who lives in Newport Beach, California. "The only reason I sang it that way was to express my love for my country. I am very happy that I did it that way."

Feliciano, who has been singing six years, said he "did not change the lyrics" of the national anthem "and the melody was not even different."

"I was a little scared when I was asked to sing the anthem," he said. "I was afraid people would misconstrue it and say I'm making fun of it. But I'm not. It's the way I feel."

This was the first time he sang the national anthem in public, he said, and "I had worked on the arrangement for sometime by myself, awaiting the opportunity."

He declined to label his version, but it appeared to resemble most closely what is termed soul music. Ernie Harwell, the Tigers' play-by-play announcer, said he invited Feliciano to sing "because he's one of the outstanding singers in America today."

The words were the same except at the very end where Feliciano added what might be written as "Yea yea ah." The melody of the standard version was retained.

Feliciano provided his own guitar accompaniment which emerged with a definite, subtle, Latin flavor. His voice might be described as a low tenor and he inserted in several places voice runs which were similar to those which might be created by an opera singer rock 'n' roll tendencies.

* * * * *

GOLDEN CANE AWARDED

by
Don Lund

[Editor's Note: The following article is reprinted from the San Diego (California) Evening Tribune.]

Mrs. Evonne Eick of 3519 Wightman Street is a logical choice to work with the blind of San Diego. She is blind herself.

And being confined to a wheelchair hasn't kept her from her busy work with the blind or her everyday chores as a housewife whose hobby is collecting salt and pepper shakers.

Nor has it stopped her from taking care of her birds—some 100 canaries, cardinals, parrots and cockateels, housed in her home and an aviary in the backyard.

Mrs. Eick was honored for her outstanding service to the blind of this community. She was presented the fourth annual Golden Cane award by the Lions Club of San Diego during ceremonies in the U. S. Grant Hotel. The award was presented by the Rev. Paul Hawkinson, chairman of the club's Sight Conservation Committee which initiated the program in 1965.

On hand for the presentation was the recipient's husband, Arthur, also blind, a retired employe of Thearle's Music Store.

"I'm delighted about receiving this award", Mrs. Eick said. "The blind people of San Diego are very happy over the work the Lions have done for us. You don't know how much the recreation center means to us, not only as a meeting place but a place where newcomers to the city who are blind can become acquainted."

Her award is unusual in that inscribed on the handsome plaque in gold are her name and the words, "For Outstanding Service"—all in braille.

Mrs. Eick was stricken with polio when she was eight and it left her blind and with some paralysis. Her hands haven't the fine sense of touch for braille as she would like so she spends a lot of her time with her talking book machine and her recipe records.

"I don't cook as much as I used to," she said, "but I pull out a record every once and a while when I cook up something special.

"The talking machines are furnished by the government. They are serviced through the volunteer efforts of the Telephone Pioneers of America, retired telephone employees who even distribute them for us."

Of her salt and pepper shakers, she says she now has 352 sets, gifts from friends and well-wishers and others purchased through the years. And she knows where each of her birds is located, she says, "because you get to know them by their sound after awhile."

How does she manage to keep so active? "I believe it's through God's gift of strength

that blind people live just as anybody else, or almost," she beamed. "Unlike sighted people, we have to make it—and we do."

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BRAILLE UNDER FIRE

by

Harry Booth

[Editor's Note: The following is reprinted from Focus, published quarterly by the Dominion Association of the Blind in New Zealand and originally appeared in Viewpoint, the journal of the British Federation of the Blind.]

During a century marked by continual experiment, ruthless self-questioning and general dissatisfaction with things as they are, we must expect to see many cherished assumptions and institutions challenged, and it is hardly surprising to find that among the blind as in the world at large, even the keys to such basic skills as reading and writing are receiving increased critical attention.

This is doubtless all to the good and, though much of what I have to say may seem to contradict the idea, let me hasten to state that I have a great deal of sympathy for those who are anxious to see braille subjected to a "wind of change" that will produce speedy concrete results. As one who has read well over 12,000 volumes during the past thirty years—and has some knowledge of foreign braille codes—I can speak with reasonable authority; yet I am far from believing that, evolving from its beautifully simple, severely logical beginnings, braille has attained a static perfection. Many a sleepless hour have I spent devising my quota of new contractions and abbreviations guaranteed to save a vast amount of time and space, and I have experienced frequent waves of impatience at what seemed among those in authority, niggling attitudes towards change of any kind.

For the record, it should nevertheless be remembered that during our century the system has undergone quite a lot of development of both a particular and a general character. The concept of Standard English Braille which sought, however unsuccessfully, to promote uniformity throughout the English-speaking world, brought in new rules on several occasions, and cautiously added a few contractions and abbreviations while relegating others to more specialised use.

In the field of mathematics and other scientific studies, codes that can fairly be called revolutionary have been approved—not without a certain impact on the general system—while controversial developments in braille music notation (with or without international backing) suggest that closed minds are not at all the rule in high places.

I now turn to some of the reasons underlying the persistent demand for a critical scrutiny of the entire system. Braille no longer enjoys a monopoly among us. As a means of communication, learning or entertainment, it faces increasing competition from the talking book, the tape recorder, radio and television. The uncritical thankfulness of former days is yielding to a questioning mood in keeping with the technological advances of the age. What

are the real functions of braille today? Is it becoming obsolete? Does the emphasis laid upon it somehow check that great scientific breakthrough which will one day give us direct access to printed books and free our homes from the huge encumbrance of a library that the seeing could comfortably house on a mere couple of shelves? Improvements in braille production stimulate a further wave of critical dissatisfaction. The reduced bulk of volumes brought about by the solid dot process is creating an insatiable appetite for more drastic development. Our range of interests is rapidly widening, yet our stock of reference books in braille remains miserably inadequate (and often shockingly out of date). For instance, a German dictionary appears that knows nothing of tape recorders, space travel or nuclear energy. Why isn't solid dot supplying us with worthwhile reference books?

Many who lose their sight in adult life make their first real acquaintance with braille through the shorthand system, and this may well increase their unwillingness to accept Standard English Braille in its current form. Again, some of us, coping with new types of employment, have had to devise our own specialised codes, and in so doing we have gained fresh insight concerning the endless adaptability of braille. On yet another level stand those who insist that the worst aspect of our handicap is our extreme slowness, compared with seeing people of equal intelligence, in absorbing knowledge and information through the written word. From this standpoint changes in braille that make for faster reading are urgently necessary.

Such, in all too brief outline, are the main impulses towards reform. Pressing needs are stressed, vital questions raised and splendid ideas put forward; yet far too much is left out of account, and it is on this we must now try to think clearly.

A sober "fact-in-focus" approach will best serve us here. Out of the total blind population, not much more than 10 percent have any knowledge of braille, and among these a very large proportion cannot by any stretch of the imagination be said to have thoroughly mastered the system. Perhaps half of the number (around 5,000) can struggle through "The Radio Times" or "Sporting Record", and there are far fewer readers of magazines like "Progress". Those who read books freely, and rightly plead for better provision, whether through the libraries or the R.N.I.B. are to be numbered in hundreds rather than thousands; they constitute, in fact, a minority within a minority.

It is, of course, the avowed policy of our leading voluntary organization to see that such important minority needs are met as fully as limited resources, whether of staff, money or equipment will allow, and it is no small part of our duty to ensure that this policy is actively pursued. Those in charge of braille production experience almost as much frustration as we do: and are deeply concerned over the existing disparities between blind and seeing readers. Scores of conflicting demands face them at every turn: and these have to be tackled in the painful knowledge that, for all sorts of reasons, a great many simply cannot be met in the foreseeable future. We the consumers, know what we want, but how often do we fully realise what we are asking for?

In a recent advertisement, the R.N.I.B., described itself as the largest braille publishing house within the British Commonwealth, but the phrase hardly does justice to the complexities of the job done by the institute. With an annual productive capacity of above 40,000 vols., it must provide vital school textbooks, a few specialised works for professional

groups, items on hobbies, light and classical fiction, poetry, plays and works of immediate topical interest. In addition, a wide range of pamphlets and periodicals flow from the press. Variety in miniature is the keynote of all this activity, and this will still be the case even if the output should double within the next few years, thanks to the promising scientific developments. The institute has many customers beyond our shores; it is not, for instance, generally known that the American Library of Congress sometimes buys more copies of a book than are sold in Britain. Our libraries also send a surprising number of volumes overseas and all this suggests that our braille production--both printed and hand-transcribed--enjoys considerable international prestige.

The recent installation of a computer at the R.N.I.B., marks the latest technical advance and it is being programmed to cope with all the refinements of current grade II braille with a view to virtually automatic transcription. For some time a number of American periodicals have been successfully printed by this method which, sooner or later, should make possible a really significant growth in output. It must, however, be noted that in Germany, where similar developments are taking place, the experts have decided that their highly-contracted code will need to be somewhat simplified before a practicable computer can be worked out.

A serious decline from former high standards of accuracy in braille production has brought bitter complaints from many readers. Technical changes, together with the growing difficulty of maintaining a staff of fully-qualified transcribers, lie at the root of this trouble and it can truly be said that our books and periodicals are produced under considerable strain.

Such, then, is the background against which we must view any suggestions for the reforming of Standard English Braille. Here, as in so many fields, the hopeful amateur is in danger of being swept out of the way amid the complexities of a scientific age--and he very naturally resents it. Thinking through one's fingertips--and not troubling to look an inch beyond them--is an alluring pastime but not before its utter futility dawns on us can we hope to make any serious contribution to the cause we have at heart.

I am not suggesting that we should leave it all to the experts--and then snipe at them in and out of season. What I deplore is the glib assumption that every fluent reader is an expert and that all this harping on these problems confronting the would-be reformer is mere moonshine.

Informed opinion and constructive criticism go hand in hand, rejecting all casual generalizations and dubious shortcomings. Here, finally, are some of the questions we ought to come to terms with before yielding to the heady delights of fashioning a system nearer to the heart's desire.

What criteria beyond space-saving, should operate when new contractions and abbreviations are under consideration? Is ambiguity to be avoided at all costs or is it acceptable in moderation? Is the risk of further incitement to bad spelling among children a relevant factor? Are the proposed new signs in harmony with the general system? Has their value been tested in relation to frequency of use? Is it agreed that there must be radical differences between a shorthand system and a general code? Should there be a lot more

contracting in books designed for particular groups (lawyers, physiotherapists, philosophers and the like)? Should the general code remain relatively simple? Is there a case for seeking to revive grade II—perhaps with modification? Is uniformity of practice within the English-speaking world worth pursuing? Should all proposed changes be referred to those in charge of the computer programme for braille production? Is a very gradual series of changes more desirable than drastic revision? Are we prepared to accept any further lowering of standards for the sake of increased output?

Such questions are bound to yield conflicting answers, but those who face them squarely have some hope of making an effective contribution towards the further evolution of braille. In the specialised fields of musical and mathematical notation, much has been achieved by informal private criticism, and enlightened proposals of a general character should be welcomed by the Uniform Type Committee.

Only a dead system never changes, and braille remains very much alive. By viewing it steadily in its proper setting, and concentrating both intelligence and imagination upon its future development, we shall be serving our fellows in the best tradition.

* * * * *

THE RIGHT TO EQUAL TREATMENT

[Editor's Note: The following letter from Manuel Urena, Assistant Director of the Iowa Commission for the Blind, to Mr. August A. Busch, Jr., President of the Anheuser-Busch Company, tells its own story.]

Dear Mr. Busch:

On Monday, October 21, 1968, sixteen students and four instructors from the Iowa Orientation Center for the Blind visited the Anheuser-Busch facility in St. Louis, Mo. This group of men and women are all adults, many of them with families of their own, and otherwise holding responsible positions. Students enrolled at the Center represent a cross-section of the population in terms of education, community participation, and in overall competence and ability. It is important to keep these facts in mind in light of the discussion which follows regarding our experience in your establishment.

Originally it was my intention to write you a letter of commendation for your progressive and enlightened attitude respecting the general competence of the blind. This is so because only three years ago I was in St. Louis, and I attempted to tour your plant. At that time the refusal was complete and absolute—I was not permitted to venture beyond the receptionist's desk. This time the results were considerably better, but short of what they ought to be.

The fact that our group received an abbreviated tour raises significant constitutional questions concerning the rights of citizens where the public is invited. However, more important than these issues are the attitudes and misconceptions about blind people that are involved in the formulation of such policies. The ramifications of such practices are disastrous to the welfare of sightless citizens. Permit me to make my meaning clear.

Consider the facts surrounding the reasons for denying the full tour to our group. The position taken by Mr. Boettecher, our guide, was that we would be required to: 1) walk a considerable distance; 2) negotiate seven flights of stairs; 3) pass near heated tanks; and 4) there were moving objects in the plant. Let us examine each of these items in turn.

The business about walking lengthy distances may be disposed of easily. Surely no one legitimately doubts that blind adults have the capacity to perambulate equal to that of the sighted. The fact that a man's eyes do not function cannot have any relevance concerning the performance of his feet. I think this is self evident. However, consider the implications that inevitably ensue if this view persists. If the visually impaired would not be allowed to go on long walks how might they accomplish innumerable tasks? How might they proceed to the store, school, church, work, and so forth? Indeed, since vision is required for driving, it could be reasonably argued that blind people out of sheer necessity do more walking than the sighted because there is not always an automobile at their disposal.

The situation is identical in the second instance. Allowing the view that blind people are unable to negotiate stairs to go unchallenged is fraught with serious consequences. Every time a visually disabled person approaches a structure where stairs might be confronted he would be barred from entering. In today's economy that would embrace every kind of building imaginable. What schools, churches, factories or places of public business or entertainment could blind people visit where they would not expect to encounter stairs? Again, any kind of thoughtful reflection must inescapably reach the judgment that sightless persons must possess the ability to handle stairs. Otherwise life in this day and time would be literally impossible.

The third problem raised, though more subtle, presents perilous implications for those individuals lacking vision; for what is essentially at stake here is the proposition that blind men and women ought to be permitted to travel without restrictions only in an environment absolutely free from hazards. This notion is tantamount to house arrest, or something worse, considering that homes very often are scenes of accident and certainly very few are completely free of hazards. More significantly, this is an environment that can never be created for the blind—or anyone else, for that matter—since risks are an accompaniment to the existence of mankind.

This third point deserves special attention. Of course, everybody wants and ought to take every reasonable precaution to insure safe passage for all citizens, sighted and blind alike. Of course, the average individual feels especially concerned for the well-being of the disabled, and particularly the blind. Of course, every business firm is properly worried about accidents, potential insurance difficulties, and other costs. Lastly, of course, the extra caution was only taken for our protection and security. All these factors are known and understood. Furthermore, the underlying motive is sincerely appreciated. Nevertheless, the road of the blind to inferior status and second class citizenship has too often been paved with the good intentions of others. Let us judge the merits of the question generally and specifically.

Governments at all levels and their respective political subdivisions hire thousands of employees, build hundreds of facilities, pay millions of dollars for all kinds of services, publicity, training, etc., for the avowed purpose of rehabilitating the disabled, among whom

are several hundred thousand blind. Every year countless individuals and innumerable business establishments are asked to pay taxes to support governmental programs—which include rehabilitation. Businessmen are constantly asked to donate much of their valuable time and energy to take part in promoting activities such as “Employ the Handicapped Week,” or to join the President’s, (Governor’s), Committee on Employment of the Physically Handicapped. In these and in many other ways persons in the business community sponsor, back, lend their names and prestige—all to develop a public climate to improve job opportunities for the disabled. Undoubtedly, your firm and many of its executives and employees have contributed significantly to such campaigns.

Speaking candidly, much of this commotion sounds like empty rhetoric to the disabled when they face the realities of the situation. Reflect for a moment. Are the disabled ever going to find jobs where no dangers exist? Is there ever going to be a day when a blind man leaves his home, sets off for work, crosses unvehicled streets, travels on sidewalks free from constructions, excavations, and other impedimenta; and arrives at the place of his employment which is 100 percent accident proof? No moving machinery, no steps, hot or cold receptacles, no dangerous wires, and a total lack of a myriad of other objects? Indeed, the situation is ludicrous on the face of it. Fortunately, the disabled do not want or require such protective custody.

Let us turn to the specifics. The steps in question were equipped with handrails. From every indication they appeared to be in excellent condition. The heated tanks were a safe distance from the stairs. Blind people do not burn or receive injury from objects in different proximity than do the sighted. With respect to moving machinery the stairs were not involved, for two reasons: the safety of the general public, and efficiency of operation. Again one is forced to surmise that such exertions in our behalf are unwarranted, unnecessary, obstructive, and fly in the face of public policy. Today, countless blind men and women are performing in factories and office buildings where there are stairs and dangerous machines. How could it be otherwise?

The fourth issue to a large extent has already been covered. These additional comments might shed more light on the subject. There is a commonly accepted misconception about the blind which holds, in effect, that they ought to be put or confined in safe places away from where they might receive injury due to moving objects. Again, the visually impaired automatically would be precluded from participation or involvement in everything from games, such as: tag, marbles, or baseball; to such necessities as: buildings, factories or places of habitation; for in all these areas movement occurs. Life under these circumstances is not only impossible but repugnant to the human spirit.

Let me conclude with a few final comments. The students are receiving training at a nationally and internationally acclaimed program of rehabilitation for the blind. All the students had long canes with them and were skilled in their use. The students were accompanied by university trained sighted and blind instructors. The students’ only disability is sight; the remaining mental and physical faculties are functioning perfectly. I reiterate that all the persons there were adults who had no previous record of irresponsible or impetuous conduct. In light of all these facts it is safe to conclude that no extraordinary precautions were needed. Your firm ran no greater risks with our group than it does every day with countless other organizations.

In classical times the notion emerged that man is a social animal. Today, modern sociologists would agree, but would hasten to add that he is a mobile creature, too. In the present rapid transportation and communication culture, nothing is more essential to personality, social existence, economic opportunity--in short, to individual well-being and integration into the life of a community--than the physical capacity, the public approval, and the legal right to be abroad in the land. What the blind need and must have if they are to be contributing members of society is liberation into public activity, not isolation from it; integration, not separation; acceptance, not rejection; exposure, not shelter; and most important of all, a realistic understanding of what blindness constitutes. Personal liberty in the sense of the right not to be unjustly or causelessly detained is an indispensable natural and civil right. Public places or those to which the citizenry is invited are for the beggar in his rags as well as the millionaire in his limousine.

I hope you give careful consideration to the foregoing remarks. I have spoken frankly but not angrily. If this letter in any way seems impertinent, please accept my apologies in advance, for such was not my intention. It is because the issues are vital that I presented the case in this fashion. My purpose was to permit truth to prevail over tradition, reason over prejudice, and realism over fantasy. If you care to reply, I shall be most happy to answer to the best of my ability any questions you wish to raise. If all proceeds according to plan, we shall be in St. Louis sometime next year. We want to include your plant on our itinerary.

Sincerely yours,

Manuel Urena
Assistant Director

Dear Mr. Urena:

Your recent letter to August A. Busch, Jr., has been referred to us as we are public relations counsel to the company and in this capacity work closely with the person in charge of tour operations at all Anheuser-Busch plants.

Thank you for taking the time to tell us about your group's experience during your recent tour. We sincerely appreciate your comments, and we will endeavor to incorporate as many of your suggestions as possible in future tours for groups similar to yours.

We regret any embarrassment that may have been caused people in your group, and we hope you will visit the St. Louis plant or take any of the other Anheuser-Busch plant tours when you have the opportunity.

Sincerely,

Raymond B. Molitor

* * * * *

TROUBLED TEACHER IN ALASKA

[Editor's Note: The following letter from J. H. Trietsch was received by First Vice President Donald Capps after earlier correspondence with the President of the NFB and Don Capps. Why a National Federation of the Blind? Perhaps this will supply some of the answer.]

1408 Tenth Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Dear Mr. Capps:

I shall attempt to answer your letter, although it will not be easy for me, and it may be quite fruitless. I have admired you for many years, as I have read about you in the pages of THE BRAILLE MONITOR: your work in the Aurora Club, your outstanding insurance record, your accomplishments for the blind of South Carolina. I have not been such a shining example, I am afraid.

I was born in Texas in 1930, became totally blind in 1946, attended the Texas School for the Blind through the tenth grade, left the school to complete high school at North Texas State College Laboratory School in Denton, in 1948, a fact which earned me the enmity of the superintendent of the state school, W. E. Allen, and the director of the State Commission for the Blind, Lon Alsop, both of whom believed staunchly that every blind person in Texas could only be educated properly in the segregated confines of a school for the blind. I attended North Texas State University, earning a B.A. in 1952, and an M.A. in 1953: with a major in history and a minor in English for both degrees. I was elected to Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges, Phi Alpha Theta, Kappa Delta Pi, Alpha Chi, and other organizations of similar caliber. I earned fifty-one straight A's at NTSU. I taught in the junior high schools of Freeport, Texas, from 1953 to 1957, teaching grades 7, 8, and 9, in the fields of history and English. I was constantly opposed by the State Commission for the Blind, as I was the only totally blind public school teacher in the state at that time. I was fought by the Commission for attending college and for teaching. This organization did its utmost to destroy me.

In 1957, I came to the Anchorage school system after having been offered a position here in 1953 and again in 1954. For ten years I taught seventh grade social studies and language arts at Central Junior High School, under five different principals: Reinford Mattoon, Leon Windeler, William Carle, Gordon Guffey, and Dee Durst. My personnel file contains good recommendations and evaluations from Mattoon and Windeler; after three years of customary probation, I became a tenure or career teacher with the system, protected by state statute. After five years of teaching in the state, having earned four hours of graduate credit in 1960, I obtained a Life Teaching Certificate from the state, No. H250, made possible only as the result of five years of "successful" teaching and the written recommendation of a supervisor or principal. Mine was supplied by Reinford Mattoon, then Assistant Superintendent of the Anchorage schools.

In November, 1966, after the beginning of my tenth year of teaching in Anchorage on the seventh grade level, holding a Life Teaching Certificate, secured by recommendation of Mr. Reinford Mattoon, Assistant Superintendent of Schools then, plus the fact that I held a

Master's Degree and had completed four semester hours of graduate credit in 1960 from the University of Alaska, I applied for a position in one of the four senior high schools here, requesting an assignment in either history or English (my major and minor fields), preferably on the junior or senior (eleventh or twelfth grade) level. A number of my friends and colleagues supported my request for transfer to a higher level, but discrimination was practiced against me because of my blindness. It was stated that I deserved the transfer on the basis of training, service, ability, qualifications, and seniority, but it was not granted, ostensibly because none of the high school principals wanted a blind teacher on his staff. I was arbitrarily assigned to another junior high school, on May 1, 1967, while the principal for the coming year, Dr. Stanley Knedlik, was in New York City, on leave of absence from the school district, earning his Doctorate. The principal at Wendler Jr. High, Richard Mize, who was being transferred to another school, the assistant principal for that year, who was also being transferred to another school (Harry Wimmer, who was being assigned principal of an elementary school), and William Neher, who was to be the assistant principal of Wendler Jr. High for the 1967-1968 school year: all approved my transfer heartily. Gordon Guffey made no effort to observe my teaching during the year that he was my principal, but he expressed doubts as to my qualifications. He informed Stan Knedlik in New York that I had been assigned to his school. When Knedlik returned in August, I went to meet him and discovered that he, too, had no faith in the ability of blind persons; he had met only one in his life: a hippy in Washington Square. He had talked to him and based his opinions of me on what he had learned from that offbeat character. I asked Dr. Knedlik for an assignment in seventh or eighth grade English or social studies, since I had not been granted my request for senior high school teaching. I specifically did not want ninth grade students, as I had taught them in Texas, and had found them to be the least co-operative of junior high school age students. Knedlik ignored my request, rearranged his teacher schedule, assigned me six straight classes of ninth grade world affairs, gave me the first period as a planning period, refused to give me a homeroom, stating that I could not complete the required forms, etc., even though I have taught in the public schools (fourteen years prior to last year).

Knedlik made my teaching year last year a "hell on earth". He ordered me to remove from my classroom walls the awards I had received, the letters of commendation from Dwight Eisenhower and Lyndon Johnson, because he said that these honors which I felt inspired the students simply attracted attention to me. He told me that my appearance was repulsive to the students, that I could not wear a silver ring because I had a disturbing habit of twirling it, that I could not close my curtains even when there were distractions outside in the courtyard. He accused me of allowing my students to mark on desks, walls, and maps, and stated that there was more "vandalism" in my classroom than in any other room in the building, which was a lie. He put many of these statements in writing, including an evaluation of my teaching under him, in which he stated that I was not qualified to teach on the junior high school level for one reason, that being that I was "so severely handicapped" that I could not "cope with the problems of discipline," etc. He stated in his evaluation that I should seek employment at a different level of education, when I was already a tenure teacher of this school district and not subject to dismissal except on grounds of immorality or dereliction of duty. He could prove none of his statements against me, but the administration backed him to the hilt. In desperation, I appeared before the church where I have been organist for a number of years and presented my case to the people of the city, asking them to express their opinions to the school administration on whether they agreed with this one man's evaluation of my eleven years of service to this community. It so

happended that the service at which I made my appeal was televised. I did not specifically appear on television to state my appeal. I only did this personal act of so-called unethical conduct because other avenues were closed to me. The school administration then called me before them, refused to permit me to have a witness or an attorney present, and attacked me for unethical and unprofessional conduct in not following the proper channels of appeal. As a matter of simple fact, I had tried the customary channels, and above and beyond that, do not consider my action unethical, unprofessional, nor illegal. The school administration refused to make Knedlik back down, nor would they investigate my claims that his statements were fallacious. Neither of our teacher organizations, affiliates of NEA and American Federation of Teachers, would come to my assistance. My only recourse therefore was to turn in desperation to the members of this community where I have lived and labored ceaselessly for the past eleven years.

As a result of the response of the people, Knedlik voluntarily promised to rewrite his evaluation, which I had already refused to sign. He stalled for weeks and then did not substantially alter its wording. I still refused to sign it, and I never shall, but it was signed by Gordon S. Guffey and placed in my personnel folder. Now, should I apply for a teaching position anywhere else in the world, that erroneous evaluation would be sent to any school or institution where I might apply. Petitions have been circulated in my behalf, but to no avail. The school administration stated that no principal in this school district wanted my services. I was again arbitrarily assigned to a position in the Adult Education Division of the Anchorage Community College, with a teaching contract from the Anchorage Borough School District. This contract states that I am to teach 186 days in this school year, which was to begin "on or about" September 1. However, on July 22, I was summoned to the office of the Resident Director of the Community College and told to report for work the following evening, to observe and work in night classes in adult basic education. This forced me to cancel a needed vacation trip to the "lower forty-eight" as we call them, and ruined my summer. I was told that I might not be granted the two weeks Christmas vacation given to all other certified employees of the school district. I have had my teaching schedule changed five times since July 22, and I started to work in the middle of the summer in direct violation of my contract. Furthermore, I have no specific teaching assignment at this late date. It was suggested that I be given a class entitled Adult Basic Education for the Blind, including braille for the blind and any adults interested in learning braille. I set to work to recruit my own students; at present, I have two. In addition to this, I serve as a sort of "aid" to the other teachers in adult basic education, and have no tangible assignment of my own. Now I am in no way complaining about the treatment which I have received at the hands of the Co-ordinator of Adult Basic Education, Mr. C. Wayne Hussey. He is a marvelous individual; I was assigned to him, and he was not even consulted about my being placed in his program. He has tried to use me as he could, but he naturally wants to select and place his own teachers. He has been very fair to me--even more than fair. Except for assigning me to go to work long before my contract stipulated, Mr. Eugene Short, Resident Director of the Community College, has been fair; I was placed in his program without his consultation or consent. I do not object to teaching blind persons; they need help and encouragement. But I spend most of my time teaching students on an elementary level where I have not been trained to teach, where my abilities and educational skills are primarily wasted. I see a great challenge in adult basic education; I have found the little bit of work that I have been able to do challenging, rewarding, stimulating, gratifying.

My basic complaint is the treatment which I have received at the hands of Dr. Stanley

M. Knedlik and Gordon S. Guffey, who, through personal prejudice and "blindness", have labeled me a failure in the teaching profession, specifically in the teaching of sighted junior high school students, after I have taught in this field of endeavor for fifteen consecutive and successful years. If you doubt any word in this letter, you can easily prove the truth of it. What I object to is the statement of Stanley Knedlik being placed in my personnel file, because it is an unjust, untrue, unfair, subjective, dishonest, fallacious statement of my ability, training, and accomplishments. I would appreciate your advice. I would also be deeply grateful if the NFB would take action in my behalf. As yet, I have not been "fired" simply because there are no grounds on which I can be dismissed. But when contract time rolls around in March of 1969, I may be forced out on the grounds that I cannot continue under the Anchorage School District while I am working for the Community College. If this happens, I lose my teacher retirement, my sick leave, my school insurance, my salary level, and worst of all, my tenure. Community College personnel are paid by the hour; when they do not work, they are not paid. There is no sick leave which accrues at the rate of twelve days a year, no retirement system like that of the School District, and no comparable salary schedule. Furthermore, I could be told that there was no work for me and thus be squeezed out. I cannot accept such unjust treatment at the hands of two prejudiced individuals. I presently work in a "condemned" building, where the temperature is about eighty degrees. My working hours change constantly, but primarily I work at night, a fact which has forced me to give up a job of playing organ for a choir, a substantial loss of income. I do not mind working with adults, working with the blind, working at night, but I do resent being relegated to a primary school situation without a specific job title or assignment. And above all, it is not fair to be "kicked out" of a school system when I have served it for eleven years with honor. I served successfully under five principals at Central Jr. High, and yet Gordon Guffey, himself one of those principals, now backs the statement of one man, a sixth principal who states categorically that I am not qualified to teach, and who gives only one reason—in writing—for this lack of qualification: my blindness. Is this honest? Is this fair? Is this humane? Is this just? Is this democratic? Please help me!

Sincerely,

Jimmie H. Trietsch

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NEVADA CONVENTION

by

Walda Kerner

The Nevada Federation of the Blind held its annual convention Thanksgiving weekend at the Hotel Cortez in Reno. While the holiday reduced the numbers, the enthusiasm and vigor with which those present dealt with the business and pleasure of the convention made it profitable for all.

The convention was welcomed by City Manager Joe Latimore. The convention was then addressed by Lt. Governor Ed Fike who pledged his support to forwarding the program of the Nevada Federation. Telegrams were read from Senator Alan Bible and Congressman Walter Baring.

Speakers were Karl Harris, Director of Health, Welfare and Rehabilitation; Roy Berry who spoke on programs of special education; Roger Edwards on aid to the blind; Jack Penman and Mike Ball on Social Security Disability Insurance determination; and Eddie Scott on problems of minority groups generally. Floor discussion was lively and informative.

K. O. Knudson of Las Vegas was a witty and cogent Master of Ceremonies at the Saturday night banquet. Anthony Mannino, president of the California Council of the Blind and NFB White Cane Week chairman, gave the banquet address. Hazel tenBroek, widow of the late Dr. Jacobus tenBroek, founder of the National Federation of the Blind, was warmly received by all. Special presentations were: a life membership to Mrs. John Tait, past state president; and an inscribed gavel from the Northern Nevada Association of the Blind to state president Jean Savage by the chapter's president, Charles Childers.

The Sunday business sessions adopted resolutions which laid the foundations for action during the coming year; elected new officers; and a decision of the assembly showing the unity of the Nevada Federation of the Blind. The convention sessions generally reflected the affiliate's wholehearted unity with the National Federation of the Blind and its policies.

Resolutions adopted dealt with: mandatory legislation requiring all districts to establish and maintain programs for all exceptional children; open-end appropriations for blind aid; abolition of residence requirements; cost-of-living boosts; raising the minimum grant in blind aid to \$135 a month; urging the state to participate in the federal food stamp program; enactment of the Model White Cane Law; licensing, contracts, and setting of standards in the vending stand program; employment regulations and seniority rights in state employment; and adherence to state statutory law in the administration of services to the blind.

Elected for one year terms were: Mrs. William Savage, Reno, president; K. O. Knudson, Las Vegas, first vice president; Mrs. John Tait, Las Vegas, second vice president; Mrs. Elmer C. Kerner, Sparks, secretary; Charles Childers, Carson City, treasurer; Board of Directors, Carl Clontz, Hawthorne; Mrs. Cleo Fellers, Las Vegas; and Mrs. Barbara Chapman, Sun Valley. Officers were duly installed by Hazel tenBroek.

Audrey Tait was appointed membership chairman for the coming year. She has vowed to travel the state to contact all blind persons made known to her.

NFB convention delegates nominated were Jean Savage and K. O. Knudson. Next year's convention city is Las Vegas.

The closing benediction was given by Mark Savage, teen-aged son of the State President.

* * * * *

THE CATES CASE

Rubin Cates of Knoxville, Tennessee, sought a mandate from the United States District Court in that state which would have ordered the Post Office to permit him to locate a vending stand in its Lee Street Annex.

Mr. Cates, the plaintiff, says he was qualified under the rehabilitation laws of the state to operate a stand in a federal building though the court states that he "does not charge" that he was so certified.

It would seem that Mr. Cates "found" the location on his own, applied for it on his own, was turned down on his own, and appealed to the court on his own. However, under existing statutes, the right to train, license, apply for locations, or appeal an unsatisfactory decision on locations, is vested in the state agency designated, at this point in legislative history, by the U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

The Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1954 as amended, still in effect, grant in section 3(a)(6) to "any blind licensee dissatisfied with any action arising from the operation or administration of the vending stand program an opportunity for a fair hearing." However, no procedure for taking an appeal by an individual is provided, nor is any body set up to hear one, a defect in the statutes which the NFB again will try to remedy in the 91st Congress.

The United States District Court refused the mandate on some very curious grounds. One that concerns us here is "that the administrative remedies have not been exhausted." True, the agency did not take an appeal, as provided by the Regulations, and, from what can be discovered from the court's Memorandum, was never involved. However, the individual did what he could under the statute: he is allowed to appeal albeit it is not clear to whom.

The court sets out in detail how applications for locations for vending stands are made by the designated state agency and makes much, in text and footnote, of the forms--in multiple copies--which the agency must properly sign and submit. It then concludes that "A court should not interfere with the administration of the post office in approving places of operation for vending machines on federal property or the designation of the blind person or persons to operate them unless it is reasonably clear that the Randolph-Sheppard Act has been violated." For authority the court cites National Life Insurance Company v. National Life Insurance Company, a decision handed down by the United States Supreme Court in 1907.

In the cited case, the Court is asked to review a special order issued under Postal Laws and Regulations written specifically to cover the facts in that particular case--corporations with similar names, located in the same city, each receiving the mail of the other along with that which belonged to it, the order specifying to which addressee the mail would be delivered. The Supreme Court concluded that to comply simply would mean substituting its judgment for that of the Post Office Department, and that "A court in such a case ought not to interfere in the administration of a great department like that of the Post Office by an injunction, which directs the department how to conduct the business thereof. . . ." Of course, as in many similar cases, the Supreme Court could have gone the other way.

In citing as authority this early case, the USDC ignores the development of administrative law and the cases which have emerged during the last sixty years.

After wandering around in the administrative morass of the vending stand Regulations, the court, in the end, admits its shaky grounds: "[I]n view of the holding of the Court that the case must be dismissed on other grounds, it is not deemed necessary to pass on the question of whether failure to exhaust administrative remedies is fatal to plaintiff's cause of action." The basis for that statement being that of the Defendants' that the "Court lacks jurisdiction because the suit is in reality a suit against the Government and the Government has not consented to the suit." However, since the statute provides for an individual to appeal, it seems that consent is thereby granted.

One must admit that Mr. Cates showed a good deal of individual, if not perspicacious, enterprise in this activity. Perhaps he should not be faulted too much. It is well known that some state agencies are charry, despite official regulations to the contrary, about letting trainees and operators know the rules, regulations, and laws under which they work. In states where blind businessmen are members of strong NFB affiliates, this is no longer a problem.

If Mr. Cates had belonged to the long-existing Blind Merchants Division of the National Federation of the Blind, or to a local or state affiliate, he would have had someone to ask about how to proceed; he would have been given assistance in his contacts with the licensing agency; and if court action seemed advisable, help with that, too.

Obviously, the state organizational connection available to Mr. Cates which existed, if any, was in no position to be of assistance. It is doubtful whether Mr. Cates realized when he started his caper in the courts, that his action would affect the lives of all other blind people who aspired to become independent by working through the Business Enterprise Program. An adverse decision of this type, once on the records of the courts, is available for use by other courts and by administrators of programs in the states against blind applicants and workers.

This case was handed down in February 1968. At the rate cases are heard by much over-worked courts, it must have been begun much earlier. But the President of the National Federation of the Blind discovered it quite by accident over the last Labor Day Weekend when asked to come to Tennessee to help with vending stand problems.

The NFB is blind people working together to improve the lot of all blind people. It offers guidance, assistance, advice, and when warranted, financial aid, in solving problems. But, as in this case, it is difficult to be of help when one discovers a problem after decisions have been made--if at all. If you have a problem--ask the NFB. Get in touch with your local or state affiliate. If there is none, write to the NFB President.

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AN SOS FOR MORE GLASSES

by

Isabelle L. D. Grant

The National Federation of the Blind, working through its many participating affiliates, has performed a noble piece of work over these past nine years in the sending of glasses overseas. An urgent call has come for more glasses. The call comes from Mr. Iftekhar Musain, Past President of the Kerachi Lions Club and sponsor of the Glasses Project. I quote from his recent letter:

We need more used glasses in Pakistan because the project of distributing free glasses has almost become universal with most of the clubs and more and more glasses are needed. We have been always importing glasses through the CARE Mission to avoid paying ocean freight and customs duty in Pakistan. We will continue to do so. I hope you will be able to persuade more of the organizations with which you have contact to collect more glasses and send them through the CARE Mission to the Kerachi Lions Club.

To place the figure of the number of glasses already sent by our affiliates at one hundred thousand pairs would be very modest. Again we acknowledge our debt of gratitude to CARE for the transportation of these glasses. Our collector, before the packages are sent to be packed in the drums for transportation, is Dr. Mae Davidow, Overbrook School for the Blind, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 19151.

Have you a glasses chairman in your affiliate?

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BLAZING NEW OCCUPATIONAL PATHS

[Editor's Note: The following is reprinted from Performance, the publication of the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped.]

Two Virginia clients of the Virginia Commission for the Visually Handicapped have "closed" marked on their rehabilitation files.

William Reynolds, 21, legally blind and Raymond Mines, 22, totally blind, are working full time in the commercial electronic field with the Livingston Audio Products Corporation in Fairfield, N. J. Livingston is the first electronic firm to use blind workers in its audio tape duplication processes and Reynolds is now in charge of all quality control for his company. Livingston makes four and eight track cartridges for use in automobile tape players and subcontracts for other tape and record duplicating companies. The firm also makes portable tape players for automobile and home use.

The Virginia Commission for the Visually Handicapped, in its constant search for additional job opportunities for blind workers, developed this demonstration project with the aid of funds from the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare to show that properly trained blind persons can successfully operate magnetic tape duplicating

equipment.

Mines, a native of Covington, Va., is a graduate of the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind in Staunton, Va. He spent 6 months in the tape duplicating training program in Richmond and then in February of this year was placed by his rehabilitation counselor with the Livingston Corporation as Quality Control Operator. He is responsible for the sound quality of the tapes and checks each track.

Reynolds, from Virginia Beach, attended the North Carolina School for the Blind. He, too, took the course in tape duplicating and joined the Livingston Corporation in March 1968. He is now in complete charge of quality control for the Livingston Corporation.

Carrel Scholten, President of Livingston Audio Products, says, "We have a job to be done and the boys are doing it to our complete satisfaction. We hope they stay with us."

Byron R. Hawley, Special Projects Director, for the firm, had a blind friend in his home town and so had some idea of the problems to be overcome. But he says merely, "That's the ball game. The guys are not asking for any favors and we aren't giving any. Sure, they make a mistake occasionally, but who doesn't?"

The pair are sharing an apartment, have joined churches, and are becoming a part of their newly adopted community. They use the local bus system for transportation and pack their own lunches.

The cases are now marked "closed" and the young men are fully rehabilitated and on their own. The Commission for the Visually Handicapped rehabilitation counselor, Edward M. Navis, provided follow-up services and assisted during the initial orientation period.

The pair have made a break-through into the tape duplicating world that can open the door to placing other blind persons in similar jobs in libraries, school systems, and other commercial duplicating industries.

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CALIFORNIA'S FALL CONVENTION

The fall 1968 convention of the California Council of the Blind was held in the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel on October 4th, 5th, and 6th. There were 260 persons who registered at the convention registration table. There were 140 rooms occupied for the convention. This was one of the most heavily attended conventions of the Council.

As is customary, Friday evening is taken up with the fundraising meeting in which the president reviews the results of our statewide fundraising activities and plans discussed and mapped out for the coming year's efforts.

Following this meeting, the Committee on Resolutions, which was chaired by Judy Wilkinson of Berkeley, held open hearings on all proposed resolutions. These hearings always stimulate lively discussion and this was no exception. It was well after 2:00 a.m.

when it came to a close. But the work of the committee was far from over, because there remained the task of redrafting, refining, and working out mutually acceptable provisions.

The general sessions on Saturday presented a number of panel discussions, speeches, and reports. One of the highlights of the convention was the panel discussion on implementation of California's newly enacted white cane law, especially the public accommodations provisions. The episode at Cal Expo was described. Craig Kletzing, one of the panelists, related the events. The discussion brought to light the fact that numerous blind persons are discriminated against in renting apartments. The convention was unanimous in support of a Council effort to secure fair housing legislation for the blind.

Lynda Bardis reported on her presentation at a meeting of the State Board of Education in support of employment of qualified blind teachers in public schools. As a result of that presentation, the Council was asked to present some demonstrations of blind teachers at work at a statewide convention of educational administrators.

Isabelle Grant captivated her audience as usual with her report on her observations, adventures, and work among the blind of Africa.

The convention was gravely concerned over a likely rumor that the State Department of Rehabilitation was planning to itself operate a cafeteria in a State office building for the purpose of training sighted disabled persons in cafeteria work and management. It was generally agreed that this scheme, in violation of the State's vending stand law, would constitute the foot in the door which would too soon result in easing out the blind from a program which was set up for the blind because of the extremely limited employment opportunities that the blind have. A strong resolution on the matter was adopted unanimously by the convention.

Another resolution pertaining to vending stands was one advocating a reduction in the set-aside fee for those operators who employ blind persons in their stands, snack bars, or cafeterias.

Perry Sundquist did his usual excellent job in reporting federal legislative developments.

Again, as is customary, there were the luncheon meetings of the Alumni Association of the California School for the Blind and of the Alumni Association of the Orientation Center for the Blind. Both meetings had large attendances.

At the banquet, Hazel tenBroek received the Council's Newel Perry award for "immeasurable contributions to the organized blind movement of California, the Nation, and the World". Perry Sundquist was presented with a pipe to mark his retirement as chief of the Division for the Blind in the State Department of Social Welfare.

The California Council of the Blind, with 49 chapters now, with an increasing number of bright dedicated students, with resolve to carry its efforts into new fields, such as fair housing, civil service examinations, is moving forward and attracting young and able workers. This is exemplified by the election of Bob Acosta and Vera Guerrola to the

Executive Committee. A new spirit has been instilled in the Council. It is the spirit set forth by Dr. tenBroek in his profound and scholarly work, The Right To Live in the World.

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TIME FOR PRIZES

It is a new year and already the spirit of the annual convention of the NFB is in the air. With the sunny South beckoning and our South Carolina affiliate full of good southern hospitality, plans are afoot to meet the challenge of conventions past.

Lois Boltin, president of the South Carolina Aurora Club, is serving as chairman of the NFB Prize Committee. She writes: "We all remember the many exciting door prizes that were won last year in Des Moines. Work on collecting door prizes is already in progress here. We are going to do our utmost to equal if not surpass the efforts of California and Iowa.

As your door prize chairman, I am requesting that you have your affiliate contribute at least one good door prize. In the past prizes have gone up in value and have included such items as typewriters, tape recorders, clocks, and electrical appliances. Each prize should be clearly labeled in print and braille with the description of the item, its approximate value and the name of the affiliate so that appropriate recognition may be given at the time of the drawing." It is hoped that this year, again, prizes will be of at least \$25 value.

Of course, we expect donations of gifts from other than affiliates and with cooperation of everyone this year's door prizes will equal those of the past. But time's awastin'. Which affiliate or group will be the first one accounted for. Perhaps Chairman Boltin will let us know in a future report.

Meanwhile, gifts should be sent to Lois Boltin, Chairman, NFB Prize Committee, No. 1 Carrillon Apts., 1413 Pickens Street, Columbia, South Carolina 29201.

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MONITOR MINIATURES

A letter to the Editor from Herb and Lois Sutherland reveals that the Monitor has again played matchmaker: "During the summer of 1966, Herb Sutherland and I wrote letters to Dr. tenBroek for assistance through the NFB and the Monitor. At that time I was in Kansas City, Mo. on a near-expired student visa from Canada. I had just recently graduated from the University of Mo. with a Bachelor's degree in accordion music and was looking for permanent work in my field which would enable me to remain in the U. S. At the same time Herb was looking for a serious accordionist to travel on a tour giving school assembly programs. Dr. tenBroek replied to each of us that he didn't know of any solutions to our respective problems; but he sent a copy of my letter to Herb, and a copy of his letter to me. To make a long story short, we got together for the tour and later married. Now we are traveling in the Northwest performing in schools for the National School Assemblies Agency in North Hollywood. Dr. tenBroek and the NFB were more help than was probably realized at the time. Along with so many others, we were saddened to learn of Dr.

tenBrock's passing."

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And, over the years, the NFB conventions haven't done too badly either. The Iowa convention was the meeting place for Judy Young and Dr. Curtis Saunders who was serving as alternate delegate with the North Dakota contingent. Their engagement was announced at Christmas time and they plan a summer wedding. Then it's off to Devil's Lake, North Dakota for Judy and Iowa will miss her. So Judy joins the ranks of convention belles who hear wedding bells.

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The latest Annual Report of the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind shows real program development. It was a year noted for increased tempo in all activities. A new high in blind persons rehabilitated was reached, numbering 133, an increase of 20 percent over a year ago. Medical assistance was made completely available to blind residents of the State. Ninety-five clients were training in college during the year. Some 2,849 individuals received Aid to the Blind and the average monthly grant was the second highest in the Nation. There were 10,120 persons registered as blind in the Commonwealth. Commissioner John Mugovan is to be congratulated on this steady progress in services to blind persons in Massachusetts.

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A 5 percent increase in assistance payments for Connecticut welfare recipients beginning last October 1 was approved by the State Cost of Living Commission. Under the law the Commission must meet at least once a year to adjust cost of living increases of 3 percent or more based on national indexes.

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The California State Department of Social Welfare increased grants in Aid to the Blind, Old Age Security, and Aid to the Disabled by \$4 a month, effective last December 1.

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James B. Garfield, who has been blind since 1942, now has his third guide dog. Garfield is a well-known writer and lecturer in Southern California and appears on television and radio programs. For the past 17 years he has conducted a weekly program on radio called "Voice of the Blind" in which he discusses the achievements of the blind in a sighted world. Garfield also authored "Follow My Leader", which was published in 1957 and is now in its fifth edition. It is the story of a blind boy and has become a children's classic. Keep up the good work, Jim!

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More than two million non-driving California adults will be eligible for new identification cards from the State Department of Motor Vehicles. The card will eliminate any embarrassment or inconvenience when a non-driver is asked for a driver's license to verify identity when cashing a check, applying for credit, etc.

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More autonomy for Mississippi's agency for rehabilitation of the blind has been recommended by a study commission in a report recently made public. The Division for the Blind is now a unit of the Department of Public Welfare. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is a part of the State Department of Education. The Committee recommendation stated that the Division for the Blind "could function in its highest potential only if it operates autonomously". The Report went on to state that "if this autonomy cannot be realized, it is recommended that the Division for the Blind be set up as a separate organization or commission."

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R. E. Whitehead, President of the Kentucky Federation of the Blind, became a member of the downtown Lion's Club of Louisville, Kentucky last November. It is known as the Home Club of Finis E. Davis, past president of Lion's International. In addition to his many activities in organizations of the blind, Bob is also a member of the Masonic order and deacon in a Baptist church in Louisville.

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Richard Swales, worker at the Maryland Workshop for the Blind in Baltimore, has been selected as Maryland's "visually handicapped worker of the year". Mr. Swales selection for the honor represented both the choice of his co-workers and the supervisory personnel of the Workshop. Now 50 years of age, Swales has been blind for the past 11 years. He designs and creates jigs and devices to assist other blind persons in performing intricate tasks.

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George Shearing, the famous blind pianist, believes that "we should do everything possible to get blind people into the sighted world. It's a mistake to steer them into occupations that keep them in the blind world." Shearing went on to say: "You can be the greatest blind pianist in the world. But if the boss of the club is afraid you're going to fall down, or if he would rather have a sighted girl than a blind man, you might not get work. These are all obstacles which the tenacity of the blind person must overcome."

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Two convicts at the Patuxent penal institution in Maryland are heading a program which will turn out tapes on which books are recorded, for use by the blind. The idea, which has heightened morale in the cells of the institution, was inspired by Professor Joseph Whitehill, who teaches at John Hopkins University. Many other prisoners have become enthusiastic about the project.

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The Progressive Blind of Missouri sent the following cable to Rienzi Alagiyawanna, President of the International Federation of the Blind, who lives in Colombo, Ceylon: "Congratulations! We share pleasure and pride in your achievement of opening the orientation and rehabilitation center for the blind in Ceylon."

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The Northern Indiana Center of the Blind held its annual Thanksgiving Dinner in South Bend--swiss steak, chicken, turkey, with all the trimmings. The 42 members who attended all felt that this was by far the most successful of these annual events.

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In the waning days of the Johnson administration, the Federal Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) issued two directives to the states which would greatly liberalize the administration of public assistance. First, HEW stated that by July 1, 1969 all programs of aid must be administered in accordance with the so-called "declaration method", which means that the agency must normally accept the statements of the client about facts that are within his knowledge, and drop routine investigations of every point of eligibility. Second, a regulation was issued requiring state welfare agencies to continue regular assistance payments to a recipient in cases in which the recipient is dissatisfied with a proposed termination or reduction of his aid grant and requests a fair hearing. The aid grant must continue in the usual amount pending the hearing on his appeal and decision of the state agency. These two directives are being strongly opposed by several large states who fear their welfare caseloads and costs will increase sharply as a result. It will be interesting to see if the Nixon administration continues these regulations in force or rescinds them. Certainly the regulations are in jeopardy since California is one of the large states fighting the new policies and that is the home state of the new Secretary of HEW, Robert Finch.

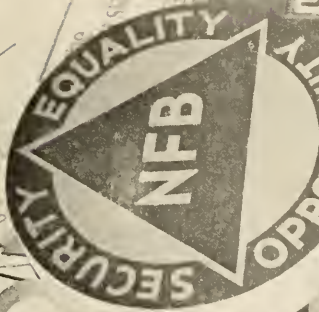
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In the Armistice Day parade held in Birmingham, Alabama the Alabama Association of the Blind entered a float 50 feet long and 8 feet wide, with a huge replica of a white cane as the dominant feature, carrying out the parade's theme of safety. Some 60 floats were entered and the Alabama Association's entry received the Judges' Cup signifying the second highest award. The Cup was presented to Mrs. Eulasee Hardenburgh, President of the Association. Good work, Eulasee!

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The Mahoning Valley Association of the Blind held their election of officers on November 24. They are as follows: president, Mrs. Marylou Cahill, 160 N. Brockway Street, Youngstown, Ohio 44509; vice-president, Mr. Joseph Ulicney, Youngstown; secretary, Mrs. Shirley Stow, Niles; treasurer, Mr. R. L. Rees, Youngstown; executive board member, Mrs. Marylou Cahill, Youngstown; bulletin reporter, Mrs. Theresa Ulicney, Youngstown.

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UTOPIA

Alabama Association of the Blind
THE FOLKS WHO KNOW THE BLIND

The National Citizens Conference on Rehabilitation of the Disabled and Disadvantaged, which had been originally scheduled for February, 1969 in Washington, D. C., has been postponed until June, 1969, it was announced today. The new dates are Wednesday, June 25 through Friday, June 27, with an evening reception on Tuesday, June 24. Planners for the conference felt that more time was needed in order to ensure a successful meeting.

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From the WSAB White Cane: "For the second year Isabel Stokes of Spokane was elected president of the Pleasant Prairie Homemakers Club. The club features home economics, but Isabel can contribute a few tricks of her own, such as how she cooks and keeps house for the family, helps care for poultry and garden, even to planting trees. She also does a considerable amount of weaving at home and attends the Day Out regularly. She is one of the most efficient blind persons; not many of us can match her activities."

"Roney Fredrickson was elected president of the King County White Cane Association on November 23 for the coming year with Marie Lenike as his vice president. Marie Bosia was named secretary, Ruth Ridge as treasurer, and Nieman Ridge was elected a three-year trustee."

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Basking in the sunlight of success are the Clovernates [of the Clovernook Home and School for the blind in Cincinnati] who were one of two choral groups chosen from among many to sing at the Annual Conference of the Ohio Federation of Music Clubs—a high honor indeed! The Clovernates have been singing for many clubs and church groups.

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On December 7, 1968, the Dubuque Association of the Blind was organized with 13 charter members. The group will become affiliated with the Iowa Association of the Blind and the NFB. Dr. Kenneth Jernigan, president of the NFB, Neil Butler, President of the IAB and Manual Urena, NFB Board member were present to assist the group at their organizational meeting. The newly elected officers are as follows: Don Gagne, president; Mae Essman, vice president; Gloria Gagne, Secretary-treasurer; 1st board position, Dick Steckl and 2nd board position, Dove Tanner.

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Governor Roger Branigan of Indiana recently appointed Mrs. Ray (Thelma) Dinsmore to a four-year term on the Welfare Advisory Committee to the Indiana Council of the Blind. Congratulations, Thelma!

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It has been said by a number of authorities in the field that there are at least some 10,000 blind persons now residing in institutions for the mentally retarded, emotionally

disturbed, and chronically ill, not because of any primary diagnosis warranting their commitment but simply because they are blind. Apparently, their families could not cope with the problems or did not want to.

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A new 32-page booklet published by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare gives a comprehensive picture of the Federal-State program of medical assistance known as Medicaid by answering 74 questions. Medicaid programs are now operating in 38 states and the District of Columbia. "Questions and Answers-Medicaid" is available from the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. 20402 at 15 cents per copy.

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A proposal that welfare recipients be exempted from paying deposits to the Baltimore, Maryland Gas and Electric Company before obtaining service was made by the Maryland Public Service Commission. Commission officials described the proposal as a first step toward relieving the poor of some financial burdens in their dealings with the major utilities. Under the Commission proposal, welfare recipients would not pay deposits to obtain gas and electric service, but the city welfare agency would agree to pay the company the equivalent of the deposit if a welfare recipient defaulted on his bills.

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Eight hospitals in New York with semi-private rates of more than \$100 a day were among those whose increased rate schedules were recently approved by New York State for Medicaid reimbursement.

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The members of the Louisville Association of the Blind had a colorful and enjoyable Christmas party at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Bcurne in Louisville, Kentucky on Saturday, December 14th. In spite of the very cold weather, 44 persons were present. Some of the members prepared an excellent dinner. The dinner was followed by singing Christmas carols and the exchange of gifts.

The above event was followed by a short meeting of the Louisville Association of the Blind. Glen Shoulders was elected to serve as a delegate and Mae Wilson as alternate to the 1969 NFB convention in Columbia, South Carolina next July. Robert E. Whitehead, president of the Kentucky Federation of the Blind and a member of the downtown Lion's Club, reported on the progress of the Lion's Club in establishing a home for the blind at Frankfort and Coral in Louisville. Whitehead is chairman of the Lion's House Committee for the Home which is to be known as Lion's Lodge. Whitehead pointed out that the Kentucky Federation of the Blind was providing funds to furnish the reception room for the home. Harold Reagan, president of the Louisville Association of the Blind and second vice-president of the National Federation of the Blind, presented a report on the recent meeting of the Board of Directors of the National Federation of the Blind in Des Moines,

Iowa. Reagan outlined the legislative program of the NFB in Congress for the coming year.

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Elwyn Hemkin, blind Iowa farmer, graduate of the Iowa Commission for the Blind, was appointed, on November 25, 1968, by Governor Howard Hughes to the Board of the Iowa Commission. Mr. Hemkin will fill out the term of W. C. Hahle, blind lawyer from Sumner, Iowa, who has resigned. The term runs until 1970 and must be affirmed by the Senate. Many of you have met Mr. Hemkin at national conventions, and know, that besides his interest in the organized blind, he is a baseball fan. He was brave enough at the 1965 convention to gather up various young sons of delegates, along with his own, and took them to watch the Washington Senators "play".

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